The Ojibways in Minnesota /

THE OJIBWAYS IN MINNESOTA.* BY REV. JOSEPH A. GILFILLAN.

* Read at the monthly meeting of the Executive Council, November 8, 1897.

In describing the Ojibway people as seen during more than twenty years of missionary work among them, I cannot claim infallibility for the impressions I am about to record, but only that they appeared so to me. It should be stated also that the names Ojibway and Chippewa are exactly synonymous, the latter being a more auglicized form of the same word.

THEIR GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.

In 1873 the local distribution of the Ojibways in Minnesota was not much different from what it is now. There were 800 or 900 about Mille Lacs; about 1,200 at Red lake; about 1,000 around Leech lake; and about 600 around Cass lake and lake Winnibigoshish. At Gull lake about 200 lingered who had not been removed to the White Earth reservation, and there were 600 or 800 scattered through the immense pine forests stretching from Winnibigoshish, by Sandy lake, to the Northern Pacific railroad; while at White Earth about 1,700 were located, very largely French mixed-bloods. Those who lived at White Earth had been removed there within five years, mostly from Gull lake and Crow Wing; but the mixed bloods had come from many different parts of northern Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The Pembina band were then living at Pembina river, and the Bets Forts or Lake Vermilion Indians where they still live.

The principal changes since that time have been that perhaps 300 of the Mille Lacs band and the remaining 200 Gull 56 Lake Indians have removed to White Earth; and about 300 Leech Lake Indians and 100 Cass Lakers, and perhaps 1,000 more French

Canadian mixed-bloods, who had been living scattered among the whites in Minnesota and Wisconsin, have come to the same place. Also a band of Pembinas, largely mixed-bloods, removed to the White Earth reservation about twenty-four years ago.

On the White Earth reservation more than three-fourths of the present 3,000 population are mixed-bloods, mostly French. At Red Lake Agency and at Leech lake there are also many. About Leech lake there are perhaps a hundred descendants of the negro Bungo; nearly all these are very muscular, and some have been of unusually fine physique. The mixed-bloods generally are inferior to the full-bloods morally, and I think also mentally and physically. However, as they speak French and generally English also, they have advantage over the full-blood Ojibways. It should be said, moreover, that there are some mixed-bloods who are as good and as nice in every way as any white people.

The beautiful and fertile land of the White Earth reservation, and the rations given by the United States government for from one to five years to each member of the families who would remove there, since the treaty of 1889, have been the inducements which have influenced those who came, both mixed-bloods and Indians. In addition, they had houses built for them, land broken, stoves, wagons, sleighs, cows and oxen given them, and many other inducements, enabling them to make a good start in life.

THE OJIBWAY'S LOVE OF HIS NATIVE PLACE.

But the Indian is very strongly attached to his old home, where he was born; and, unlike the white man, he generally lives and dies in his native village. He knows every tree and pond for miles around, and he knows he can make a living there for he has always done so; but he has a dread of going elsewhere, even to far more fertile land, to try to make his living, for that is launching out on, to him, an unknown sea. Hence the offer of four or five years' rations of, to him, most luxurious food, and of oxen, plows, wagons, and everything 57 to begin farming with, has not tempted the Ojibways in large numbers from their native lakes, as Mille Lacs, Leech lake, Cass lake, and others. The Ojibway reasons to himself: “I

have here an inexhaustible supply of fish; I have venison, wild rice, and other things; but if I go on the prairie, where there are none of these things, and where I must plow and work for a living, perhaps I shall have a hard time. So perhaps I had better not leave the fish, nor let these offers tempt me."

The Ojibway always, in his natural state, lives on lakes or rivers. He is a fish Indian, and draws his subsistence largely from the water. Formerly he lived on other flesh. Old Indians still living tell of the countless herds of buffalo, moose, elk, reindeer, and other animals, which filled the country in their young days, and which they say were in such vast numbers that they did not think then it would ever be possible by any effort of man to diminish them. They tell of the moose yarding together in those days, in winters when the snow was very deep, in droves of hundreds, and of their going and killing them all with their axes. But with the nearer approach of the white man the game was driven off, and the Ojibway became of necessity a fish Indian. The fish could not be driven off like the buffalo. In their natural state, fish is about three-fourths of their living. It may be proper here to say that when the earliest Indians were removed to White Earth, in 1868, there were still a few buffalo to be seen on the prairies there, and for some years afterward.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

In appearance the Ojibway is a fine looking man, especially when living in the freedom of his native forests, and before he has been enfeebled by the vices he has learned from white men. Many are quite tall, the tallest I have seen being from 6 feet and 4 inches to 6 feet 8 inches. They have well developed chests and sinewy frames. Their limbs are not nearly so heavy as those of many white men. They very generally have small and beautifully shaped hands; indeed, from their hands one would take them to be of nature's aristocracy. The men have an erect, graceful, and easy carriage, and a beautiful springy step and motion in their native wilds, where they walk and look like the lords of creation. In their beauty of 58 motion in walking the men far surpass our race; there is no swinging of

the arms, or other awkward motions, but grace and a beautiful poise and carriage of the body.

As is well known, they have abundant thick and strong hair. I can only recall about two Indians of the whole Ojibway nation who are bald, and they only partially so. Nor does their hair early turn gray, as often with us; this change comes only in extreme old age. When approaching the age of eighty years, an Ojibway's hair turns gray, but not much before. Often at the age of seventy-five, their hair is as black and thick as at twenty. Their hair never turns quite white, so far as I can remember.

The Ojibway man has usually beautiful, white, even teeth, till far past middle age, although he never cleans them and takes no care of them whatever. The voice is usually high pitched and resonant; the eye black and liquid. The man does not usually get stout as he grows old; he rather, if anything, dries up. It is rare to see a fat Indian man, except when it has been caused by excessive drinking. Their leanness, as they grow older, has been accounted for, in my mind, by their incessant spitting from their great use of tobacco, and by the spare diet to which they are usually condemned.

The women are in many respects a great contrast to the men. Instead of the beautiful springing step, they trudge along with a heavy, plodding tread, devoid of all beauty of motion. They have not a particle of the grace in motion of their white sisters. Their heavy gait I have accounted for in my own mind by the heavy packs and burdens which for generations they have had to bear. Many of the women have packed, all their lives, burdens of two hundred pounds. With this continued for centuries, it is no wonder that their step is heavy. The Ojibway man, in his native state, rarely carries any pack, if there be a woman along to do it, unless there is so much that both must pack. He puts it upon the woman, while he strides along in front, magnificently, with his gun. Both parties seem to look on that as natural and proper. Sometimes when a man marries a young woman, he puts his own pack on her in addition to her own and soon breaks her down. In this, as in nearly all here written, I am speaking 59 of the heathen Indian; for when they become

Christians, they view things in a very different light, and their practice approaches our own. The woman always walks behind, never by the side of a man. Often on the top of her enormous pack, if the articles be bulky, as when moving her wigwam, etc., from place to place, one can see the baby perched high above her head, securely tied to keep it from falling from its perilous height. On a journey the woman packs the birch bark for the wigwam, the rush mats to sleep on, the cooking utensils, the food. Sometimes I have seen the woman invert the heavy canoe, weighing 80 or 100 pounds, over her head, and carry it for miles and miles over all portages, while her husband took the light traps. The women generally have very large waists. In middle life they are usually quite stout and fleshy, and I think would average more in weight than the men. They seem to be just as expert with the axe, and as strong for all kinds of labor.

At Red Lake the women especially, but also the men, are, for some reason unknown to me, exceedingly tall. The Red Lake Indians are by far taller than the other Ojibways, which is the more remarkable as they have not lived at Red Lake very long. Many of the men there are 6 feet 4 inches in stature. I have known some so tall as 6 feet 8 inches. I know considerable numbers of old women there who must be about 5 feet 10 inches to 6 feet tall. It would be interesting to know what there is in the soil, water, or food, which has so soon produced such a tall race.

INFREQUENCE OF INSANITY.

It is strange that, considering the hardships of their lives, insanity is extremely rare among the Ojibways. Only once, along in the 70's or 80's, during an Indian payment at Mille Lacs, when many hundreds were collected, did I see an Indian who seemed to be insane, and he not very violent. A crowd of young men and boys were around him, teasing and mocking him, and he was striking at them. That is the only crazy man I happened to see, or to know of. A young mixed-blood man from White Earth, nearly white, was in an insane asylum for some time; also a woman from Leech lake was under such care for a time. Also a middle-aged man wandered off into the 60 woods in a semi-demented state and died.

I have known only two feeble-minded or idiotic, one a young man of twenty-three years, whose idiocy was caused before his birth by his mother's seeing for the first time a railroad train, which rushed out at her from a cut on the Northern Pacific railroad. She fell in a dead faint and lay thus for some time, and her son is an idiot. It is also a matter of thankfulness that, considering the hardships, suicide is extremely rare. There has been only one case in twenty-five years, this being an elderly woman who hung herself at the gate in front of her door, after a family quarrel.

CHANGES DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.

It may be interesting to compare a first look at the Ojibways with what one sees to-day. It was in 1873 on the White Earth reservation. Many of the Indians then dressed in the old Indian garb of blankets, cotton leggings, and moccasins. Now there are only a few old men who are so dressed, though all who can get them still prefer the moccasins. The White Earth Indians were then rapidly rising in all respects, under the influence of the mission and the admirable management of the agent, E. P. Smith. There was a little church well attended; but old Indian habits, as might be expected, were still strong. Sometimes they would go from the church, at the conclusion of service, to the Indian dance which was in full blast not far from the church door with all its drumming, whooping, and jumping up and down. There was thus the mixture of Christianity and heathenism which might be expected.

That winter there came from Red lake, where they were all at that time wild men, about sixty old grand medicine men, in January, when the thermometer was about forty degrees below zero, bringing the big medicine drum with them, and sleeping out about four times on the way, 80 or 90 miles. Their coming created a greater sensation than would that of Paderewski to your city. The big drum was brought out, with all the old fellows from Red lake singing around it so loud that their voices could be heard, it would seem, for miles; and soon most of the inhabitants of White Earth, discarding the garments of civilization which they had lately put on, and 61 painting themselves once more as wild men, were

whooping and dancing around the drum, telling stories about the Sioux they had scalped, and having a veritable orgy which made night and day hideous for weeks. Thus the infant Christianity and the infant civilization of the place seemed for the time to be swallowed up and lost. The old Red Lake medicine men ate so many (logs in continual medicine feasts, that, as Paul Beaulieu wittily said, they went home barking.

In the fall of 1873 I first saw the Leech Lake Indians. It was annual payment time, and there were perhaps a thousand or more assembled in the public square. They were all, so far as i can remember, wild blanket Indians, with faces painted, long scalp locks, and feathers; they were wrapped in blankets of green, white, blue, red, and all colors. It was a cold October day, the wind blowing and some snow flying, so that we felt the cold in thick overcoats; and I was surprised to see great numbers of little children, running around everywhere, entirely naked, or some of them with only a thin cotton shirt flying loose in the bitter wind, affording really no protection at all. Now, most of the Leech Lake Indians wear citizens' clothes.

In 1876 I first saw the Red Lake Indians. On all the large stones about their village there were offerings of tobacco, laid there for the gods who were supposed by them to inhabit those rocks. They lived in bark wigwams, and there were many fields of corn. They were all wild blanket Indians, fantastically painted. We had gone to speak to them about founding a mission, and had taken along with us some Christian Indians from White Earth who were considered the very best speakers, to speak to them on the subject. Besides we had a present of some sacks of flour, some pork, and tea, to dispose them to a favorable hearing. They filed in, dressed in gay colored blankets, and with all their Indian paint and bravery. They eagerly seized the present of provisions and carried it off; but, as often happens, they cared nothing for the eloquence we had brought them, and indeed would not listen to it. When they had got the provisions, they wanted nothing more. Now, among the 1,200 Red Lake Indians there are few blankets to be seen, and most of the scalp-locks have been cut off.

An intelligent American employee, who lived among them about ten years before that time and had married one of their women, told me that when he was there they had a custom, both men and women, of plastering their naked backs in the summer time all over with white clay, which dried and hardened and adhered to the skin, and that upon the clay they painted all kinds of curious figures, so that it looked very strange to see them stalking around all summer with those painted figures on their backs. That was about thirty years ago; now they are mostly dressed like other people, the change in that, as in other respects, having been rapid.

HOME LIFE IN THE WIGWAM.

In 1873 nearly all the Ojibways everywhere, except the few newly removed to White Earth, lived winter and summer in birch bark wigwams. Now, nearly all of them have built for themselves, or have had built for them by the United States government, one-roomed log cabins, in which they winter; but, in front of these, nearly every family puts up in summer an old style birch bark wigwam, in which they pass the summer, returning to the log house when the cold weather sets in. They properly prefer the wigwam for its greater coolness, better circulation of air and greater cleanness. There are still, however, some families who from preference winter in birch bark wigwams. That would be to us a life of extreme and intolerable suffering from cold. The strips of birch bark are laid loosely on, and there are great chinks everywhere through which one can put his hand, and there is the open top. The family sit round the fire in a circle, on rush mats made by the women from rushes which grow in the lakes; and as long as the fire is kept up one's face is warm while facing the fire, but, if it be cold weather, one's back, opposite the open chinks, is never comfortably warm. It would seem that it is only because they have become so used to suffering extreme cold in these wigwams, through so many centuries, that they ever survive a winter. They do not complain of it, however, and do not seem to mind it. It is

certain that from long habit and from heredity they can endure a degree of cold that to us would be intolerable.

On approaching a wigwam, the custom is to raise the blanket which hangs over the doorway and go in without asking 63 permission or knocking as with us. Everyone seems privileged to go in by day or night. If the inmates look on the newcomer with favor they say when he raises the blanker door and looks in, “Nind ubimin, nind ubimin (We are at home, we are at home),” which is a welcome, though nothing is thought on either side if silence is preserved. The best seat is considered to be that directly opposite the opening or door, behind the fire. That is the seat and bed of the master of the house and his wife, while along the sides is the place of the children and others. If the master of the house wishes to treat the newcomer with great respect, he moves from his sear on the mat, saying to the visitor in cheerful words to sit there, smoothing out the mat for him; and brushing away any dust, so that it will be clean. Around the fire in the center, and at a distance of perhaps two feet from it, are placed sticks as large as one's arm, in a square form, guarding the fire; and it is a matter of etiquette not to put one's feet nearer the fire than that boundary. One or more pots or kettles are hung over the fire on the crotch of a sapling. In the sides of the wigwam are stowed all the clothing, food, cooking utensils, and other property of the family, although the space available is extremely small.

CONVERSATION WITH VISITORS AND AMONG THEMSELVES.

The owner of the lodge inquires of his visitor the news; and the visitor is expected to tell anything interesting that has happened, especially if, as often is true, the wigwam is the only one for five or ten miles distance. He tells, not the general news of the world, of which neither the host nor the visitor knows anything, or indeed would be particularly interested to hear, but anything that has happened among the Indians, as deaths, sickness, or what the other families of Indians known to both are doing. If he comes from a strange village, as from Leech lake or Red lake, he tells the news of that village, the councilings that are going on, the subjects that are being discussed. Generally each Indian man, and often

the wife, knows individually the men and women of all the other Indian villages within fifty or a hundred miles and is interested in all. The coming of a visitor is therefore like a newspaper, by which the host posts himself to date, on all 64 that is going on. The Indians have a great deal of curiosity, and like to know all that is happening. Although a man may be out with his family, hunting, perhaps ten miles from any other human beings, he keeps a mental register of the position of every other man and family, and seems to be able to tell just where each one is. no matter how far in the heart of the wilderness he is buried, or what he is doing. The probable nearness or remoteness of the annual payment is always a subject of interest, and generally that is the first thing inquired about.

Are the Indians silent and reserved in their domestic life? Just the reverse. There is continual laughter, and jests flying all round the wigwam from the time they wake in the morning till the last one goes to sleep. As long as they have anything to eat, and if no one is very sick, they are as cheerful and happy as can be. The laughter and droll remarks pass from one to the other, a continual fusillade all round. The old woman says something funny; the children take it up, and laugh at it; all the others repeat it, each with some embellishment, or adding some ludicrous feature, and thus there is continual merriment all day and all evening long. They have the advantage of us in having the cheerful fire shedding its light and warmth upon them instead of stoves; and there being no chairs or seats, they have an easier position than we, reclining any way they please.

AFFECTION FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

In the center of the wigwam, the little children go staggering round, just beginning to walk, whose mishaps and falls furnish endless merriment to the other children and to all. They are either entirely naked or wear only a cotton shirt reaching to the hips, once white but now black, as it seems never to be washed. This little one, with its bright black eyes and dirty face, stumbles in a droll way over the legs of those reclining; then its father takes it and plays with it, and fondles it a long time. Then it gets hungry and goes and takes a pull at its mother's breast, and this it keeps up till three or four years of age; even after a

younger baby has come, the mother nurses both together. Sometimes I have seen the old grandmother, long past child-bearing, take and nurse the large child at her breast; and from the persistence and diligence 65 with which it worked, its wants seemed to be relieved. The father is just as fond of his little children, and fondles them just as much, as any white father.

FOOD AND HOSPITALITY AT MEALS.

Take it altogether, life is very happy in the wigwam, so long as hunger does not invade it. With food in abundance, life seems to be a continual feast, a merry-making all day long. None of them seem to have anything to do, excepting the wife or the old woman. To prepare a meal, if it be in winter, one of these goes outside and from somewhere brings in the frozen fish. She deftly cleans off the scales, removes the entrails, and cuts the fish into pieces, which she puts in the pot over the fire, until enough for a meal has been put in. Then, if they have tea, that great luxury, as it is considered by the Indians, is provided. If in addition they have flour, hot bread is baked, and a perfect meal, according to their ideas, is produced. The woman stirs up the dough in a tin dish, without kneading; then sets it up slantwise in the dish on the ashes, facing the fire; and turns occasionally the other side of. the cake toward the fire, testing it by tapping it with her kunckle, until she sees it is done. Then she sets a plate of boiled fish before each one where he sits, pours out tea in a tin cup, and, if they have it, breaks off a liberal piece of warm bread. As there are no tables or chairs, the housekeeping is easy and simple, and the woman of the house can do most of it without rising from where she is sitting. Sometimes there is only fish, without anything else, and a few years ago that was considered good enough; but the nearness of the whites has produced the desire for a more varied diet, and tea and bread are now thought very necessary. Sometimes I have seen wildcat alone, or some other kind of flesh alone, if the head of the house had been hunting; and everybody seemed to be satisfied with it. There is never any dessert, and they care nothing for pies or cakes.

The visitor has his portion set before him, as well as the others; and formerly it was etiquette for him to say when the dish was set before him, “Oongh ondjita,” which might roughly be translated, “O, this goes to the right spot.” The Ojibways are very hospitable indeed. The visitor is always fed, is given 5 66 a share without question, so long as they have anything themselves. No matter if he be utterly lazy, never doing a stroke of work, or if he be a gambler and has just come from the game, he seems to have just as good a right to the food as any one who is there. A while visitor is expected to pay something, perhaps ten cents for the meal, or twenty-five cents, but the Indian gets it as a matter of course. Sometimes, when they wish to pay great respect to the visitor, a white cotton cloth about two feet square is spread on the mat where he sits, and upon it his food is placed. That is the tablecloth.

There are no regular hours for eating; just whenever they get hungry and the good woman prepares something. In addition to the articles enumerated above, there are often delicious wild rice, ducks, venison, potatoes, or boiled corn. There may be partridges, or moose or bear meat, or many delicacies. Often one will get as delicious and well-cooked a meal as could be found anywhere. They are all very good cooks. Especially do they excel in cooking fish, which they nearly always boil, but sometimes fry. I have heard excellent white women cooks, who had lived long among them, say that an Indian woman could give a turn to fish that no white woman could equal. After the meal is over the dishes are gathered up by the women, and set slantwise on their edges around the outside of the wigwam until the next meal.

THE DRUM AND CHANTS.

Very often the man of the house, tired of doing nothing all day, takes his drum out of the bag that holds it, and settling himself begins to chant or sing, accompanying himself by beating his drum. He has many different kinds of chants, war songs, gambling songs, Sioux songs, songs of Sioux and Ojibways approaching each other with offers of peace, and many others. The chant is very intricate and beautiful. He sings it with his face

directed upward, a sort of ecstatic look upon it, his mouth open, the drum between his knees, and a sort of shaking motion of his body. His voice is loud, high-pitched, and resonant; on a still evening it would seem that he could be heard for a mile. The little children look at him with a sort of entranced wonder, while the women ply their work of preparing food, tanning a skin, or making beadwork 67 or moccasins. He, inspired by his own efforts, naturally feels himself to be a sort of superior being. At last he has sung all the chants he knows, chants which are extremely difficult for the most practiced musician to reduce to note or to reproduce; and after a few final flourishes, he puts the drum away, and comparative silence once more reigns.

SLEEPING IN THE WIGWAM.

Gradually the young children begin to grow sleepy. The mother asks the little one, “Do you wish to lie down?” and holds up the little blanket or quilt which is to be its sole covering. She wraps it round the child, and lays it down on the mat beside her, tucking the blanket in under its feet and over its head, and soon the little one is in the land of dreams. Gradually the older children, and then each member of the family, takes his or her blanket and a pillow, or makes a pillow out of something, and lies down in the place he or she has previously occupied, all covering up the head, but generally leaving the feet exposed against the bright fire. Indians always sleep, winter and summer, with their heads tightly covered up. It seems that they could not go to sleep otherwise. White people living with them soon learn the same habit, which for six months of the year is a necessity. The breathing of the same air over and over again within the blanket does not seem to produce any bad results; and the warm breath retained adds much to the slender stock of heat Each person sleeps alone except that husband and wife have one blanket. The day clothes are never removed, either by men, women, or children, though in old times they are said to have been removed. They are said to have formerly slept naked, rolled in their blanket only; but the example of the French voyageurs changed this. Even the moccasins sometimes are not removed. In a long sickness of weeks or months, it is common for the sick man to continue to wear his moccasins. The feet are at first exposed to the fire, and

there is a row of them all round it; but as it dies down the sleepers instinctively draw them up under the blanket and tuck it in. Often every foot of the wigwam is covered with the prostrate bodies.

In about an hour the fire of the winter evening dies down, and the air coming in through the open top and the many 68 chinks makes it almost as cold in the wigwam as out of doors. It may be anywhere from ten to thirty degrees below zero inside and yet one blanket, old and worn at that, and not warm, is all that each sleeper has to cover him. Sometimes a thin quilt is spread in addition over the lower limbs, but one blanket seems to be the regular standard allowance, and is considered enough. The wonder is that they survive a week of such cold, but they do not seem to mind it. The white traveller who has been hospitably taken in has his thick underclothing on, moccasins and arctic overshoes, coat and fur overcoat, fur cap pulled over his ears, a warm new blanket enveloping all, head and foot, so that his breath is kept in like all the rest to add the greater warmth; and yet he lies there shivering, unable to sleep. At last in sheer desperation he starts up, and begins groping round the door of the wigwam and outside it, trying to find some wood to make a fire to relieve his sufferings. Yet all around him are sleeping calmly those who have on only a cotton shirt, cotton leggings, and the one thin blanket; not a tithe of the clothing he has. There is no doubt that such life, long continued, puts a strain on the constitution, especially of the young. Oftentimes when the traveller is feeling round for wood, a child will rise, throw aside its blanket, and stand there in the arctic temperature, coughing and again coughing. Its mother will rouse for a minute, and say, “My little son, are you cold ?” and the answer will come, “Yes, I am almost cold.” Such a hard life, even though it be not considered by them to be hard, along with other things, accounts for the high mortality among Indian children.

I have never been refused admission, and the privilege of passing the night, in any wigwam. When one has been travelling all day through the virgin forest, in a temperature far below zero, and has not seen a house nor a human being and knows not where or how he is to pass the night, it is the most comforting sight in the whole world to see the glowing

column of light from the top of the wigwam of some wandering family out hunting, and to look in and see that happy group bathed in the light and warmth of the life-giving fire. No princely hotel in a great city can equal the blessedness of that wigwam. And no one, whether Ojibway or white, is ever refused admission; 69 on the contrary, they are made heartily welcome, as long as there is an inch of space.

ENDURANCE OF COLD.

The Ojibway women wear surprisingly little clothing, even in the coldest weather. A white cotton chemise, a calico dress, and a petticoat, are all, even in the coldest weather; and, of course, the blanket over all, for protection and ornament by day, and for a complete wardrobe by night. Besides there are mittens, not very thick, made by themselves, usually out of old pieces of cloth; and moccasins, with either socks or pieces of cloth wrapped round the foot to take the place of a stocking. Every winter many women, along with the men, start, say in January, to visit the Indians of another village a hundred miles off, either travelling on foot and packing their loads, or going with their ox teams and sleighs; but in any case they camp out every night, about four or five times each way. They enjoy every minute of it, and look forward to it with the keenest pleasure. White women, on the contrary, going over the road in a stage or covered sleigh, wrapped in furs and generally managing to get inside some sort of a house at night, where they sleep warm, are nearly always sick at the end of the route. To have gone with only the cotton chemise and calico dress and blanket, and to have slept out with only that covering, would have killed them.

The Pembina band of Ojibways have a custom of putting out the fires, and sitting all day, and lying all night, in the cold, for a few days before setting out on a winter journey, in order apparently to toughen themselves to it. None of the other Ojibways do so. It may be that because the former are prairie Indians, and so are exposed to the more severe blasts and greater hardships, they have adopted this method.

When an Indian is travelling and camps for the night, he always makes a fire, if possible, and if he has a fire and his blanket he considers that he is perfectly comfortable in any weather. If for any reason he cannot make a fire he curls himself up, like a ball, inside his blanket, resting only on his back on the snow. I have known them to sleep so out of doors, without a fire, when the temperature was forty degrees below zero, in the coldest nights that I remember in Minnesota, 70 and yet survive and continue the journey the next morning. As a general thing, however, the Ojibway considers it pretty hard, and himself in bad case, if he cannot have a fire, in a cold night, sleeping out of doors.

Although they are constantly travelling and exposed to blizzards far from home on the hunt, I cannot recall any who have frozen to death in the last twenty-five years, except one. He was one of our Indian catechists from Canada, in charge of the Cass Lake church and mission, George Johnson. On the night of the 26th of February, 1897, he was frozen to death while hunting deer. The thermometer was perhaps forty degrees below zero, and he was not a well man, having heart disease.

SUCCESSION OF OCCUPATIONS DURING THE YEAR.

From the time when spring opens, there is a constant succession of events in Indian life, covering every week of the year until the winter sets in severely. These I cannot give in their exact order and sequence, and some of them I do not know. But, roughly speaking, there is first the arrival of the crow, about March 20th, the Indian's much looked for sign that grim winter is over, and that spring is at hand. When an Indian sees the crow, he knows that he has survived the starving time, winter, and that he will live; for he can always find abundant food during the spring and summer and fall months. The seeing of the first crow or hearing his call is therefore an occasion of great rejoicing, heralded everywhere. There is always anxious inquiry about that time, whether anyone has seen or heard a crow. Then follows moving to the sugar maple woods and the making of maple sugar by the women, while the men go trapping muskrats, and hunting generally. The women are so fond of sugar-making that no power and no money could keep them from

it. The children all run away from the schools about the 22nd of March and go too. All are overjoyed to be living once more “under the greenwood tree.” Often in their haste and anxiety they move out six weeks too soon, if there comes a spell of mild weather, and wait there freezing and starving. The sap usually begins to run April 5th, and the buds come out May 5th, when sugarmaking is over. Some families at Leech lake, which seems to
71 be the great sugar-making place, make 2,000 pounds each. At Red lake and White Earth they would not average over 500 pounds a family. It is hard, exhausting work, owing to the antiquated methods they use, of deep pots and kettles instead of evaporators. No explanation can induce them to adopt the latter. Their moccasins, feet, and lower limbs, are sopping wet in the melting snows in the woods for a month or six weeks; and they sleep so, being wet all the time, night and day. They are very busy carrying sap in pails, chopping wood, and keeping up fires all night long. The exposure, poor food, and exhausting work, are a great strain on their constitutions, and a good many die every year. Especially those children who have been kept warm in schoolhouses all winter, catch colds from being continually wet and sleeping wet, and go off into quick consumption. I knew that a man who did chores for me had not had off his wet moccasins nor his feet dry once for six weeks, night or day, in spring. It seemed to do him no harm, but would have killed any white man.

While the women are making maple sugar, the men go off fifty or a hundred miles to trap muskrats and other small animals. Very often they bring back about one hundred dollars' worth of furs apiece in a month's time. Then they are with their women for some time at the end of sugar-making. Then planting whatever potatoes they plant, and later corn, comes on. Then after an interval, the strawberries are ripe, and successively later the raspberries and blueberries. Next is the taking of birch bark from the trees, for wigwams and to make canoes; then hoeing the gardens; then pulling rushes from the lakes to make mats; then making canoes; then gathering wild rice, and afterward cranberries. All these imply journeys to the places where these happen to abound, as twenty or perhaps fifty miles and back. The exact succession of these events I cannot recall, but each has its

own particular time; and, taken together, they occupy the entire year until cold weather. When one family starts for the particular berry that is ripe just then, or for the particular thing that should be done, that starts off all the others, as no one wishes to be left behind. This is heathen life; when they become Christians and farmers, this continual wandering life becomes modified to a certain extent.

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When the cold weather begins in November each family usually starts off ten or twenty miles for a prolonged hunt. They stay out usually till January 1st, when the severe weather drives them home to their winter quarters. Very often a family claims a certain spot as their hunting ground, and they go to it year after year, and it is understood that no other family is to intrude on their territory. Of course they take the children and everything with them; and during that time they always live in birch bark wigwams. They kill deer, bear, moose, and many other animals, and live high, and make a great deal of money out of furs.

Captain Wallace, who was killed at Wounded Knee, made an investigation of the Mille Lacs Indians, and found that from all sources, furs, wild rice, venison, etc., the Indians of Mille Lacs got hold of a great deal more money in the course of a year than the average white farmer. The same is doubtless true of all the Indians. In the course of a year they have up to this time, from various sources, got hold of a great deal of money. It is a mistake to try to force them to be farmers only, as our government has heretofore seemed to try to do. Farming is too hard work, and means too long waiting for returns. They like very much better something which brings quick returns, as they had in their old life.

FREQUENT SCARCITY OF FOOD IN WINTER.

From January 1st till the crows come, about March 20th, the Indian remains quiet in his log house, in his village, to which he has returned, with nothing particular to do. Then, if at all, especially towards spring, is his starving time. The snow is deep, there is no game to be got, the produce of the little fields has been eaten up, also the wild rice and the flesh that

was brought from the hunt. If pains have not been taken to lay in an ample stock of frozen fish in November, there is apt to be hunger; for it is very hard or impossible to take fish now under the great depth of snow and ice. The wife of one of our Indian clerygmen told me that oftentimes in the village where they were missionaries, Cass Lake, no one had anything to eat but themselves, sometimes for three days at a time. This of course was owing to their own improvidence, for a very few days' labor would have raised all the corn and potatoes 73 they could use; or a few days' fishing in November, when the winter's supply of fish is taken, would have put them beyond want. And it does not apply to all the villages, but to that one in which the people were the most improvident of all. Oftentimes when suffering severely from hunger in the dead of winter, they bitterly lament their own improvidence in not having planted some corn and potatoes, and vow that if they live through till spring they will do differently, and provide food enough for the next winter. But when the abundance of summer comes, the starving of the past winter is forgotten, and the time is passed in dancing and pleasure, with no thought for the future and no provision made for it All the Indians who are middle-aged recall the severe starvation to which when young they were periodically subjected, and through which they hardly lived. Yet these severe lessons did not lead them to provide, what they might so easily have provided, abundance.

HABIT OF GOING IN DEBT.

Since the first French traders came among the Ojibways, it was their custom to outfit the Indian for the hunt, to give him in advance ammunition, tobacco, and everything he needed as clothing for himself and for his family. When he brought back his pack of furs he paid this debt with them, and immediately took a fresh debt upon him, as much as his trader would permit. This has come down to the present day, and has become ingrained, so that every Ojibway goes in debt to his trader just as deeply as he will allow him. It is not considered right to contract a second, third or fourth debt, to as many different traders; and the traders often have a tacit understanding among themselves to prevent that, nevertheless it is frequently done, and very generally attempted. The Ojibway is no

more dishonest than any other man, but owing to the vicious system in which he has been brought up, of going in debt all that his trader will allow him, and also owing to his usually not working, and so having nothing to, pay with, he is usually deeply in debt, and finds his necessities driving him to go in debt more. The experience of the traders with the heathen Indians is that every man is trying to go in debt all he can, while the payment is slow and with many doubtful. 74 As the traders express it, “Every man is striving to get something for nothing.” The annuity also that was promised to them under the Rice treaty of 1889, has operated disastrously to them in that way, as in many others, for the Indian goes in debt on the strength of his annuity, and many persons will trust him on the strength of it; so it is usually swallowed up many times over beforehand. And being very small, at the most only $9.20, it operates as a bait to go in debt on the strength of it, rather than as a help. Many Ojibways, however, are conscientious to make payment, and it is astonishing to us how much their traders will allow them to go in debt. Some of them go in debt to the amount of $200, with no property in the world but a gun and some traps, and they pay it The traders, being mixed-bloods, understand getting it out of them; but it is doubtful that a white man could.

CHIEFS AND ORATORS.

The office of chief does not now amount to anything, owing to the great numbers of chiefs that have recently been created by United States Indian agents. Formerly there were only two or three chiefs of the whole Ojibway nation; now some chiefs enroll only eight in their band, counting men, women, and children. The chiefs are no wiser nor better than the mass of the people, but rather inferior to them if anything. It is now a mere honorary title, without power or authority.

We hear much said of the eloquence of the Indians. Many of them are good and ready speakers and present things clearly and forcibly. They do not much use the metaphors and similes that popular imagination has credited them with, but talk like sensible and therefore truly eloquent men. While many are admirable speakers, there is only one who

is a genius, a truly remarkably eloquent man. He is the Chief Wendjimadub (Where he moves from sitting), or, as his French name is, Joseph Charette. He lives at White Earth, and is about fifty-five years of age. He has a little French blood. I consider him perhaps the best speaker, the greatest orator, I have ever met. Although without education—he does not know a letter—his powers are remarkable. He has all the vehemence, the fire, the energy, command of language, range of thought, of the true orator. As another said, “Every word comes like an 75 electric spark from his heart.” I think he would be considered a wonderful speaker in any nation.

The lineal descendant of the old hereditary chiefs of the Ojibways lives at White Earth, Mesh-a-ki-gi-zhick (Sky reaching to the ground all round). He is now about sixty-eight years of age, a remarkably fine looking man, with a strong, typical Indian face. He would attract notice anywhere. He is a man of many noble qualities.

There was one of the chiefs who towered above all the others in the great nobility of his nature, and who fulfilled any ideal of the nobility of the Indian that Cooper or any other person ever drew. That was Med-we-gan-on-int, the head chief of Red Lake, who has just died, at the age of about eighty-four years. He was made by nature one of the greatest men in mind and body that I think I have ever seen. He was of commanding stature, six feet four inches, and of imposing presence. Nobility was stamped upon all his actions and words and his looks. It would seem that he could never have done a mean thimg. He was very level-headed, true to his friends, patient under seeming neglect, unselfish, and of such a broad vision and sound judgement as would have made him an ideal ruler anywhere. His distinguishing characteristic was his wonderful judgment. Amid all the perplexing questions that he had to deal with, and where the wisest man, white or Indian, could hardly discern what was the proper thing to do, his unerring judgment infallibly picked out the true path among so many misleading ones and followed it. He never was carried off his balance, never mistook the trial. He was as sagacious as Washington himself. Even when the was a heathen man, he was always noble. For the last twenty

years of his life he was a Christian. When Christianity came to his village, he at once accepted it, and had all his childredn, grandchildren, and relatives do likewise.

When a young man he was a great warrior and hunter and of remarkable bodily powers. A young man came out from Washington, provided with instruments to measure Indians for the Columbian exposition; but the width of the chief's shoulders, the length of his arms, the size of his head and chest, made all the measuring instruments useless. He told the writer that when, as a young man, he picked up his canoe 76 and inverted it over his head, he would not lay it down for twenty miles. About two miles is as far as most men, even the strongest, wish to carry a canoe, without a rest. He was no orator, and said very little; but when he did say a few words, that ended the matter. All felt that “Daniel had come to judgement.” He alone of all chiefs was revered and obeyed by all the people. He was free from all the weakness which, in different forms, attached to all the others, as they do to all men, and he towered over them all. Looking back on his career closed, one sees that he was made by nature and his Creator a truly great man. It was his delight to go every summer, on foot, even up to eighty years of age, with a party of men of his band, hundreds of miles over the prairies to visit the Piegan Indians. He could not understand a word they said, but they were relatives, he said; their fathers had hunted together long ago, and the pleasure of seeing them was, to him, great. His nature craved that excursion on the boundless prairies every year. He pointed out places on the White Earth reservation where the Sioux had chased him, and the clumps of poplars where he hid from them and was safe.

THE OJIBWAYS OF RED LAKE.

About eight hundred Ojibways live along the south shore of Red lake, and about four hundred on the long point at the Narrows between the southern and northern parts of the lake. The houses of those living on the south shore are built by themselves of logs, plastered with clay, being small and with one room only. A feature of the Red Lake home is the chimney, made by themselves out of a whitish clay. It burns a very great deal of

wood, but is admirable. There are no chairs, tables, beds, or stoves, in the house; but there is a board floor cleanly swept, with rush mats all round, on which the inmates sit, eat, and sleep. The chimney is in the corner farthest from the door, and nothing can exceed the warmth, comfort, and cheerfulness of a Red Lake home on a winter evening when the bright fire in the chimney floods the room with light and heat. The wood is pine, cut four feet long, and is placed on end in the chimney. It ignites readily, and burns with a bright flame. The family or families and visitors are sitting all round on the mats, with their bed-covering neatly 77 folded up by the wall, and animated conversation and cheerful laughter are heard on every side. No enjoyment that we have in our homes, with the fire shut up in an iron box, is equal to the flooded light and warmth of the Red Lake home. The food—it may be boiled corn alone or perhaps with fish—is neatly and cleanly served on plates laid on the mats, beside each person.

It takes a great pile of wood to keep the fire going in the open chimney for twenty-four hours. It is the business of the women to supply it. Every day one can see, about four o'clock in the afternoon, long strings of women, each with her ax and packing strap, going out into the woods perhaps a mile; soon the woods are vocal with the axes; and then equally long strings of women are seen issuing from the woods, each with her load upon her back, and each woman packs an immense quantity. This is thrown down at the door of the house, and brought in as needed. If a woman at Red lake meets a man on the path, she goes off to one side, perhaps into the snow above her knees, about four feet from the path, and there patiently waits for the man to pass.

The Red Lake Indians are the most industrious of all the Indians; they are apt to be always doing something to make a living. They will starve with the seed corn by them, rather than eat it. They have raised quantities of corn in their little fields by the shore of the lake, for a hundred years past, planting the same ground over and over again, and it does not seem to be exhausted. Sometimes the land is not even plowed, or hoed over deeply, for the new crop, but just planted as it is. Along in the 70's one could see strings of women packing corn on their backs a distance of five miles or more, to sell it to the traders at a cent a

pound for goods. As the railroad was then far from Red lake, perhaps a hundred miles, the prices of the provisions they got in exchange for their corn were very high, flour $5 a sack, common tea 50 cents a pound, four or five pounds of pork for a dollar, and sugar about the same, so that their corn brought them very little, only equal to a small fraction of a cent a pound.

The four hundred Ojibways at the Narrows lived in a more heathenish way, in those days, than any others of this people. There was the log house, but extremely small, and extremely 78 filthy and ill-smelling, never swept nor tidied, but having all sorts of refuse inside. The inmates looked unwashed and unkempt; the children wore no clothes, or only the white cotton shirt, if any; and the grown up people in summer wore very little. Instead of glass a piece of white cotton cloth would be nailed across the window, as in many other villages where they are poor. They have always a particularly abundant supply of fish there; and they lived on fish alone, sometimes for months without even salt. They did not seem to crave even salt. Yet they seemed to be perfectly healthy. They have a splendid rich black loam soil, much finer than I have seen anywhere else in the Red Lake region, bearing a magnificent deciduous forest. Anything they plant grows to, the greatest perfection.

Around their villages we saw images of birds, etc., their protecting deities to ward off ill luck and sickness. The gambling drum and the medicine drum were always sounding; and all they wanted was to be left undisturbed in their heathenish ways. They would have no school, church, or mission. We saw women sitting round a fire in the night. That was where a person had died within three days; the wigwam had been pulled down, and they had made a fire, because then the soul on its way to its future abode would have a fire and be comfortable. If they made no fire, the season being winter, the departed soul would have no fire, and its sufferings could be imagined. After three days it was no longer necessary, for the soul had reached its abode. When a mother puts her little boys to sleep at night, she first draws what seems to be a quart of water into her mouth, and then squirts it, with force enough apparently to turn a mill wheel, into the ears of each, first on one side

of the head and then on the other. That is to keep off evil spirits. She feels that she can keep house just to perfection, and can raise children just as they ought to be raised. The unusual heathenism of the Indians at the Narrows arises from their living in such a remote place, where civilization has never penetrated. A few years ago they were living apparently as they did when Columbus landed.

THE OJIBWAYS OF CASS AND LEECH LAKES.

The life of the Indians at Cass Lake differs little from that of the others, except that they are the most improvident 79 of all the Indians. They raise very little corn or potatoes and therefore suffer most frequently and severely from starvation. All through the spring, summer and fall, food provided by the bounty of nature, as venison, moose-meat, wild rice, and fish, is extremely abundant; and they then forget the long cold winter, and the need to provide for it. Many families start in to pass the winter without even a potato or any other food ahead. Their sufferings in consequence are severe, year after year.

There are two kinds of homes at Leech lake, which are very different, the heathen and the Christian. The former is a small log shanty, with earthen floor, and so low that one can touch the roof. There is no fireplace, but an old broken cooking stove and also a heating stove. There is no bed, table, nor chair, but the usual mats. The house is never swept nor cleaned in any way; the day clothing and bed coverings are as dirty as they can be; and spittle and hawkings from the throat and nose are everywhere so that one cannot sit down, or put his hand anywhere, without touching them. The house is nearly as full of people as it can hold; sometimes big girls and young women lolling over each other, and in each other's laps. The old man is smoking, and the young man may be painting his face, greasing his hair, and tying sleigh bells round his ankles for a dance. The drum is tied in a bag suspended, and there is a pack of cards. Everything speaks of idleness, heathenism, and filthiness. There is one dim window light, and the place is dark and forbidding.

The Christian home at Leech lake is also a log house, but it is large, light, and airy. There is a board floor, and it is so clean you might bake bread on it any time, it being scrubbed to whiteness; there are a table, chairs, cook stove and heating stove. The bed in one corner looks clean and inviting, and it is as well made as any white woman could make hers, and has decorated pillow shams. Pictures are on the walls, and altogether it is an inviting home that anyone might be pleased to live in. The meals are nicely served, on a clean white tablecloth, and in clean dishes. There is nice warm bread, pork, potatoes, and tea. The comfort and cleanliness are quite equal or superior to those of the average white settler. 80 The inmates are cleanly dressed, the man has a white shirt, and they look respectable. The reason of the difference is that they are Christians.

HEARTINESS IN EATING, AND FISH THE STAPLE FOOD.

If the Ojibway can get flesh, as venison or beef, he likes it best of all and will make his meal almost exclusively of it. I have seen a woman, lately delivered of an infant, eat what seemed to me to be two pounds of beef, without anything else, and it did her good.

We hear a great deal of how much Indians eat. The Ojibway eats no more than any other man, when once his hunger is satisfied. Often he has had very little to eat for a long time, and, like any of us, he would make a good hearty meal when he does get to good food. The Indian children in a school do not eat as much as white children when once they get filled up.

The Ojibway's staple food now is fish. Every morning the first thing the woman living on Leech lake, Cass lake, or Winnibigoshish, does when she awakes is to take her paddle, jump into her canoe, and draw her nets. Usually she takes more fish than they can use. Indians have averred to me that no Indians living on those lakes were ever hungry, and that if any said they were they lied. With a very little forethought in laying in a supply of fish, no one, I am sure, need ever suffer hunger. In the fall, when the lakes are just freezing up, is the time of their laying in their supply of fish for the winter. An Indian woman

at Leech lake lately told me that she set her nets four nights at that time and caught eight hundred splendid tullibees, a species of white fish. That was about the usual catch. Every family can take an unlimited quantity, for winter use, at that season. They are hung up by the tails to freeze dry. In front of every house on the lakes at that season is a rude frame, with thousands of fish hung on rods driven through the tails, the winter's supply of food. Out of the 1,000 Indians at Leech lake, only one man was ever known to draw or set a net; it is left exclusively to women.

What then is the life of the Ojibway man in his native state? I mean the heathen man. The only thing he does that ever I could see, is to hunt a little, in spring and fall. Occasionally a man will be found who will raise some corn and 81 potatoes. The rest of his time, when not hunting, is spent in gambling; or in lying on his mat in the house or wigwam, gossiping; or in visiting other wigwams or bands of Indians; or, for some part, in dancing. He also spends a good deal of time in drumming and singing. The woman is the bread-winner of the family.

OJIBWAY GAMBLING; FEASTS AND COUNCILS; HIS IDEAL.

He does not think gambling any harm; he has been used to it all his life. If in winter, it is done in his wigwam or house, where he is warm; if in summer, out of doors. A blanket is spread, beside which from one to three drummers, holding aloft small drums in their hands, keep drumming and singing the gambling chant or song while the game goes on. Usually, when approaching a village, one can bear the gambling drums at a long distance; and coming nearer he finds the men collected in a group, the gamblers, who may be six or eight in number, hard at their business, and the rest of the men interested spectators around them. As fast as the drummers are exhausted with the continual high-pitched singing, others are substituted for them. They do not seem to be able to gamble well without the drumming and singing. The women of the village are all quietly going about their work, but no man is doing anything; they have all been attracted by the game. The gamblers often seem to have a kind of fit on when engaged in it; their bodies seem to

be disjointed, and each particular limb to be shaking a shake of its own. The game often lasts three days, and till it is finished they hardly take time to eat or sleep. The stakes are anything a man has, his gun, his blanket, his coat. I have sometimes seen a man go through the winter in his shirt sleeves, who had gambled away his coat One man took off and gambled away his only pair of pants. It is usually done in their own way, the bullet and moccasin game; but some use cards. The little boys begin at a very early age, and sometimes the women gamble in their houses or in the street; but the women are not nearly such incessant gamblers as the men.

Sometimes the heathen Ojibway goes through a performance manifesting forth to himself and to others that he is a 6 82 god, that he has supernatural powers. He sits down outside, collects all the movable articles around him, and keeps them flying into the air, tossing them about and all around in every conceivable manner. His admiration of himself grows as he witnesses his miraculous performances until he comes to look on himself as indeed a god.

In every Indian village there is always something going on. Some are striving for superiority, just as it is among ourselves; and others are trying to pull them down. Every day the men meet to discuss matters; there is continual counciling. One of our Indian clergymen who lived at Red lake twelve years said that never once in that time did there cease to be something going on, that took up their attention. Often when sitting in the wigwam one will see the blanket door pulled aside for a moment, a face appears, and “You are invited to a feast” is said to the good man of the house. He thereupon rises, picks up a wooden mug and spoon, and goes. The feast consists probably of whole boiled corn, and perhaps fish, of which the guest gets a mugfull; but there is something to be talked about that seems vitally important to them. Of late years electing some of their number to go to Washington about their affairs takes months of counciling, and keeps their minds continually on the stretch.

Then sometimes it takes the man many hours in a day to paint his face properly for the dance, and to oil his hair and arrange his head-dress of feathers. So his time is very fully occupied. In summer he goes off a hundred miles or more to visit another band of Chippewas; or he goes to visit the Sioux two or three hundred miles away, and is gone most of the summer. So his time slips away, and he effects nothing.

The conception of life by the Ojibway and by the white man is fundamentally different. The white man's thought is to do something, to achieve something; the Indian's is that life is one long holiday. He has no wish for any improvement, nor to live differently; he just wishes to take his ease and enjoy himself. He sees the white lumberman, for instance, out two miles from his logging camp, waiting for daylight to begin work; sees him toiling all day, “dinnering out,” and going home tired, in the dark, to his logging camp. The Ojibway thinks he has a far better way, he has been lying in his 83 wigwam all day, enjoying himself, warm and comfortable. If he gets hungry, he goes out and catches a rabbit, for there are a plenty of rabbits everywhere. So he finds far more enjoyment in his life than he would in the toiling, slaving life of the white man.

INDUSTRY OF THE WOMEN; THEIR SERVILE POSITION.

The Ojibway woman, on the other hand, is industrious, especially the middle-aged and old woman. Besides fishing for the family, the women usually raise all the corn and potatoes raised, put away the produce of the gardens, gather the wild rice, and, generally speaking, do all the work. The women every afternoon, as was before stated, take their axes, chop the wood, and carry it to the lodge door with their packing straps. It may be a short or a long distance. If the woods have all been cut away near the village, and if there are ponies as at White Earth, Leech lake, and other places, then ponies are used to bring it; but when the logs have been deposited at the door, the woman always takes her ax and chops it. No family ever thinks of keeping a day's wood ahead; so if there is a blizzard and excessive

cold, say at Leech lake, every pony and sled that can be mustered has to be out in the midst of the blizzard on the ice going for wood. It is that or freeze.

The women, though far superior to the men in point of usefulness, and it seems to me their equals in bodily strength, are made to occupy a position of great inferiority. The woman always walks behind the man; and she turns out of the path for a man when she meets him. At a feast women never sit with the men; even the young boys have to be served first; and then, last of all, the women, who have had all the labor of preparing the feast, can sit down and consume the fragments. Even the exclamations of the language are not common to both sexes as with us; the woman has her own, exclusively for women, and must not use those a man does. The Indians look on our deference for women as foolish, affected, a fad.

The heathen man thinks it his undoubted right to whip his wife, and he exercises his privilege freely. That is one objection that even some Christian Indians find against the Christion religion; namely, that the wives, knowing they will no 84 longer be whipped, since their husbands have become Christians, presume upon that and are not nearly so good and submissive as they formerly were, or as they ought to be. Generally the wife yields to the argument of the ax helve on her scalp, and, like a spoiled child, seems to feel better after she has been whipped. But that is not always the case. An Ojibway whose name is, in translation, The one with the far sounding and penetrating voice, undertook to whip his wife, but she turned on him and broke his arm, then tenderly nursed him till he was well, and they have been a most loving couple ever since. And it is true that among the Ojibways there is about the same proportion of women as among the white people, who, being stronger mentally and with more energy and sense, rule and govern their husbands, to the good of all. Especially in middle and later life the intellectuality and masculine powers of the wife are apt to come to the front.

MARRIAGE, AND ABANDONING WIFE AND CHILDREN.

Many of the heathen Ojibways have two wives, and some three. It is considered perfectly proper to have as many wives as one can, and as there are government annuities for each woman and each child, which the man as head of the house draws, it is an inducement to add more. Sometimes the two wives are sisters. Usually they live in far better peace with each other than white women would under such circumstances. The man usually has two separate homes or wigwams for his two families; but sometimes they live in one house. Often the first wife feels aggrieved at the taking of a second, but does not actively object.

There is no marriage ceremony among the Ojibways. Usually all the girls (I am speaking here as everywhere else in this paper, unless the contrary is expressly stated, of the heathen Ojibways) begin to bear children as soon as nature will permit, and keep on bearing as long as nature will allow, I have never known an Indian girl to live as an unmarried woman,I am speaking of the heathen. But I have known Christian Ojibway young women who lived single always, and whose characters were as spotless as any woman's could be. Among the heathen a girl usually lives a while with one man, and then with another, and there is a great deal of changing 85 around. Usually, though, the elderly and old people are faithful to each other and continue to live together. But any heathen woman, one will find on inquiry, has lived with a good many different husbands. There was only one man among the Ojibways who never married. He was in consequence called “The everlasting young unmarried man.” He lived to the age of seventy years.

It is quite common for a husband, after having lived with a woman for a long time and raised quite a family, to abandon her and his children without any cause, and to take another woman and begin to rear a new family. A man, for instance, will abandon his wife and children at Leech lake, and go to Red lake, seventy-five miles distant, and take a new wife there. Or he may do so in the same village. In such circumstances he never does anything to support the wife and children he has abandoned. I have never known a man in such a case to do the slightest thing for the children. But when the time of the annual payment comes round, he always tries to get the annuities coming to the children and to

his abandoned wife, and generally succeeds. If he be opposed, he makes a bitter fight before the Indian agent, to that end. And when he gets hold of the money, he never gives any of them one cent. One can constantly hear the poor woman lamenting that not only has all the money of the children, whom she is supporting, been taken, but that he has got hers also. The woman always supports the children. The man only helps his children, even when they are members of the family in which he is living. He does not seem to lose caste in the slightest degree by such desertion or non-support of his children. It is so common that it is looked on as the regular thing.

Let no one think from this that the Ojibway man does not love his children. He seems to love them dearly: In his wigwam or log cabin he fondles them and plays with them by the hour, just like a white father. When they are sick he seems just as much distressed as a white father would be. He will not let them go away to school, if it be any long distance away, for fear that something may befall them, and he far away. When they sicken and die, he shows the greatest dejection and the most bitter grief. I have seen him burst into tears. 86 Often I have thought, and still think, that the Ojibway loves his children more than the white man; and I have accounted for it to my own mind by the fact that they lose so many of their children, making those who remain doubly precious. And yet so often he abandons them, apparently without a cause, and apparently without ever giving them a thought again. It is a much more rare thing for an Indian woman to abandon her children. Like her white sister, she clings to them and manages to support them somehow. It is understood that it devolves on the woman to support her children.

I have never seen the slightest endearment pass between husband and wife, not the slightest outward tokens of affection. Yet there is no doubt that they are as much attached to each other, especially in middle and later life, as those of our own race.

BABYHOOD AND CHILDHOOD.

Library of Congress

For the first year of its life, the Ojibway baby is taken most excellent care of in its well known cradle. It is wrapped in a great many thicknesses of flannel and soft material, which effectually exclude all cold, and it is perfectly warm and comfortable in any weather. Its head is protected from injury by the wooden piece surrounding it. It likes the firm feeling of being bound and swathed in this frame, and will cry to be put into it. The frame can be leaned against the wall at any angle, and so it can be relieved by change of position; or, best of all, the mother carries it suspended on her back, by a strap passed round her forehead, while she goes about her work. I have seen a mother at Red lathe, while waiting all day out of doors for the annual payment, take out in the open air and nurse her baby in a temperature of about thirty degrees below zero, and the baby was not over six weeks old. An intelligent United States Indian agent, observing them, remarked, “An Indian woman can doubly discount a white woman in taking care of her baby.”

But with the emancipation of the baby from its cradle, a surprising change in its treatment occurs. It goes naked, or almost so, winter and summer, having only a shirt and moccasins until five or six years. The parents seem to think that it needs no clothes. One will see it outdoors playing in the 87 snow, when it is very cold, clad only with the cotton shirt, flying loose, and moccasins. Then the parents go on long winter journeys, or they very frequently travel miles in the night to some heathen dance, the mother carrying the young child on her back when the mercury stands thirty or forty degrees below zero. The dance house may be hot, and then there is the home journey in the middle of the night. These carryings to dances cause the death of great numbers of children. Their life is hard in every way, the constant moving about in winter, the insufficient food, the exposure, the insufficient clothing, the one blanket in which the little child sleeps. The wonder is that any children survive it, and only the strongest constitutions do. And when the child becomes sick, the only idea they have of doing anything for it is to drum over it night and day, or to perform the “grand medicine” rites for its recovery.

Whatever is good for them, the parents think must be good for their children also. So they give them the strongest tea to drink as soon as they are able to drink anything; and all the flesh they can eat, or anything they happen to have. From the same idea, the little children very early get to using tobacco. I have seen a boy of four beating his mother with his tiny fists, to make her give him more tobaccos. Every boy and girl thinks he or she must have tobacco, and plenty of it.

The parents have no government whatever over their children. They are absolute masters from the first dawn of intelligence, and they very quickly find it out and rule. Sometimes the mother gives the child a push or a cuff, saying to it, “You are spoiled;” but lets it take its own way. They never correct them, nor try to bend them to their will. I suppose the reason is that they lose so many children and therefore cannot bear to correct nor cross in any way those that survive.

When a child is crying, the mother tries to quiet it by saying, “Hush, that Frenchman will strike YOU,” pointing to the white stranger who is there. Frenchman is the common name for any white man, as the French were the first white men they saw. When that is not enough, she tells it the owl will come and carry it off; and when that from long use has lost its terrors, she shows it a piece of the owl's ear, into which it will be put. As fast as one lie is worn out, another is invented; 88 and threatening, which is never carried out, is also used. The moral effect on the child cannot be good.

Indian children are much more amiable than white children. They do not quarrel so with each other. Perhaps from heredity, several families living in one long wigwam, they have learned to bear with each other's frailties and to keep the peace. The grown up people, also, I think, live much more peaceably with each other than white people. Indian children in a school are not nearly so troublesome to their teachers as white children, and they are much more easily controlled.

MECHANICAL INGENUITY AND SKILL.

Does the Ojibway have any mechanical ingenuity? A great deal more than we give them credit for. In fact, they seem to be able to make anything they want to make. One of our Indian clergymen makes a cutter or sleigh that is good and serviceable, although he never had any instruction. A mixed-blood young man at White Earth was with his mother, when her wagon wheel broke. He took his ax, went into the woods, and made a new wheel that answered the purpose. Since that time he has established himself as a regular wheelwright, and seems to be able to do that work perfectly well. Yet he never had a day's instruction. To another Indian young man I lately intrusted the building of a frame parsonage. He had built only one little board shanty before, and had had no training or experience excepting that. Yet he built the two-story parsonage, costing about $500, very well, and it looks well. They undoubtedly have a great deal of mechanical ingenuity, if they wish to exert it. One of these Indians made a fiddle.

The women, too, make most beautiful patterns in their bead work, which is often marvelous. Lately some of them have been taught lace-making, and the beautiful lace they turn out astonishes white experts. A highly educated young white lady, a teacher of lace-making, told me that she spent two weeks learning a certain lace-stitch, and then took as a pupil an Indian girl with no previous training in this work, who learned it in half an hour, and could do it better than she. The Indian children also model in clay very beautiful figures.

It is a pity that their undoubted genius cannot be made to benefit the world. Usually from indifference and lack of desire to apply it, unless called out by some necessity, it is never used. But it is there in high degree, and it has already permanently enriched our civilization in giving us the birch bark canoe, the moccasin, and many other things that might be mentioned, which, for beauty and perfect adaptation to the purposes intended, cannot be surpassed.

INTELLECTUAL TRAITS; COMPARISON WITH THE WHITE RACE.

This leads me to remark that in my opinion the intellectuality of the race is very high. I think it surpasses that of our own race, though, from circmstances, not being called out, it is not used nor known. But let any one listen to them discussing anything that is propounded to them concerning their own affairs, and he will be surprised to note how they look at it in every light, discussing it from points of view that he never would have thought of, and to observe how strong and original their minds are. I think no lawyer can equal an Indian, who yet does not know a letter, in making a skillful and telling presentation of his case, in marshaling his arguments effectively; and in concealing the weak points. And yet, with all their intellectuality, in another point of view they are sometimes grown up children.

The Indian is a highly educated man, although this may sound absurd to those who hear me. Said an Oxford graduate, then an inmate of my family, who often sat with Indians at meals, “These men seem to me like highly educated men; the lines of their faces seem like the lines of the faces of highly educated men.” And I think it is true, that, though in a different way from us, the Indian is so. In everything that is needed for his life, or related to it, and even beyond it, he is so. The open page of nature, all about plants and animals, about life, a thousand things that are unknown to us, he knows perfectly. His faculties are far more highly trained than ours; his perceptions are far more keen. He will see fish in the water, animals on land, the glance of a doer's eye behind a bush, or his ear sticking up, where a white man cannot see anything. Canoeing with Indians, one will constantly hear them pointing out fish, numbers of them, naming them as bass, 90 pike, etc.; but the white man can see nothing. So even when going along in the cars, they will see many deer or other animals where no one else can see anything.

In one respect the Indian is remarkable. He is such a reader of character. There is no use in trying to deceive him. He seems to look right through a person, and “sizes him up,” as the phrase goes, much more accurately than we can. They are very accurate judges of a person's social standing.

What does the Indian think of the white man? We show them our electric lights and our other wonders, and think they will fall down and worship us as superior beings. It is not so. The Indian, it is true, sees his white brother do many wonderful things. But put the white man in his circumstances, and he is a miserably helpless creature, far inferior to the Indian. He does not know how to make a camp, how to protect himself from the cold, how to find the game. Put an Indian and a white man into the woods; the white man can see nothing and will starve to death, the Indian can find a good living. In the Indian's country and in his circumstances, the white man needs the constant help of his red brother to keep him alive. No Indian has been drowned on the great lakes of Minnesota, as Leech, Cass and Winnibigoshish, within the memory of man, unless he was loaded with whisky; the white men have just settled about those lakes, and already considerable numbers of them have been drowned. In brief, the Indian sees that he is just as superior in his sphere as the white man is in his.

The Indian has a far higher opinion of himself than the white man of himself. “Do you not know,” said one of our Indian clergymen to me, “that the Indian thinks his body God?” That translated into our idiom means that he has a very high idea of his own personality. Consequently the one who treats him with very great respect is the one who gains his esteem and love.

It is strange also that with the Indian amiability is the test by which he judges. One of themselves may do anything, no matter how outrageously bad, even according to their own standard, and he will not lose caste in the least. He will associate with the others precisely as before, without a thought on his part, or on theirs, of there being any difference. But 91 if he loses his temper, or, as we say, “gets mad,” he has utterly fallen in the Indian's estimation. To lose control of one's self, to get in a passion, to scold, is with the Indian the unpardonable sin. I cannot remember ever to have seen an Ojibway in a passion.

The Ojibways have certainly many strong points. Their speech is clean. I can hear more bad language among my own people in half an hour than I have heard among the Ojibways in over twenty-four years. They never swear, and I have heard very little obscene language. Once at Sandy Lake I did hear such language; almost every word was foul, but I saw that they were only imitating some of the scum of the frontier, whom they had met, and that they thought it was smart. That is saying a great deal for them, cleanness of speech.

Also they are far more honest than the whites. I have inquired everywhere among the lumbermen, for hundreds of miles, and the testimony is always the same, namely, that where the Indians are they can leave things lying about and nothing is taken, but when the whites come there is a sad change. From Bemidji, through by Pokegama lake to Mille Lacs, the testimony is always the same. They have also more respect for the law, and more fear of the law, when they know a thing to be law, than the whites have.

Among the poor Ojibways life and property are absolutely safe. There has been no instance of any man or woman having robbed or “held up” another, red or white, in a quarter of a century. They would never think of such a thing, and it makes no difference how much money a man may be known to have on him, he is perfectly safe. A helpless woman or child might go from end to end of their country by day or night, and would never be molested. Among the Indians one has the feeling of absolute security in person and property. During twenty-four years I have never carried a gun or pistol when traveling among them, and that was almost constantly, in a circuit of about 300 miles, except once for fear of wolves; and never have I had firearms in my house except once, when some white tramps were reported to be meditating an attack, of whom the Indians also were mortally afraid. My family and I never received anything but kindness from the Indians, 92 and never felt one moment's apprehension. Once we were gone for three months, and the house, untenanted, and filled with things they needed, stood by the roadside. When we came back it was untouched. All of us, when among the whites, at certain times and in

certain places, fear and are on our guard; when we want absolute security, we go among the poor Ojibways.

The Indian is extremely suspicious; he hardly ever gives his confidence to any man, especially a white man. For instance, let him have known a white man ever so long, and have always found him perfectly upright, and his friend; yet if that white man proposes something new to him, he will never take it on trust, nor think, “Here is this man who is wiser than I, and he proposes this thing for my good; therefore I will accept it.” Instead he will view it with suspicion and think that it is some plan to injure him, and will examine it with that thought constantly in his mind. He views everything with suspicion. He is the least trustful, and the most suspicious of ill, of all beings.

I have never met an Indian who did not believe in the existence of deities and the life beyond the grave. I do not believe such a one can be found, or that there ever was such an Indian. It is a part of the warp and woof of their thought. At the same time their belief in a future life does not seem to have any influence on their conduct here; nor do they seem to have any fear of retribution beyond the grave.

MURDER RARE, EXCEPTING WHEN DUE TO INTOXICATION

I cannot recall any murders by Ojibways of their fellow Indians, when not intoxicated, except that one man, a mixed-blood, killed a woman who rejected his improper proposals; and that another mixed-blood killed his wife and an Indian, who, aided by this second wife, had killed his first or real wife. Also at Red Lake a man was shot by another, whether accidentally or not was never determined.

One or two white persons have been killed in collisions with the Indians within the past twenty-five years; but not so many as there have been Indians killed by whites.

Until about twenty-five years ago, great numbers of Indians were killed by each other in drunken fights. Our aged 93 Indian clergyman has a record of the murders in Crow Wing,

a village of perhaps five or six hundred inhabitants, where he was then living; and in one year, there were, I think, about one hundred and twenty-five such murders. Those were in the sad times of debauchery, before the present missions were started. And at Mille Lacs, where there is no mission, the mortality in drunken fights has been very great all through the years. But in the rest of the Indian country, as at Leech lake, Red lake, Cass lake, and on the White Earth reservation, they have learned the sacredness of human life. At Mille Lacs, until within a very few years, and perhaps now, a common sight was to see the women gathering up all the guns and knives, and taking them away into the woods to hide them, the men being about to engage in a drunk, and they being anxious that none should be killed.

NATURAL POLITENESS AND PATIENCE

A pleasing characteristic of the Indian is his politeness. He is never rude, rough, and boorish, as the white man often is. When a stranger comes into the wigwam, no matter how much the curiosity of the inmates is excited, they will not stare at him. One can see them check the little children, when, their curiosity being excited, they stare at the new comer too intently. They are naturally polite. They very quickly learn table manners that are unexceptionable, and to conduct themselves in company with ease and grace, and often with great dignity. When the wife of our aged Indian clergyman was attending a reception at the White House, there was a greater crowd of distinguished people, congressmen and others, around her and her husband, than there was around the president; but she was equal to the occasion, and received with the grace and dignity of a queen. Indians say that when they go among white people the latter often crowd up to them and stare into their faces, as if they were wild beasts. They would never do that. The average white man whom they meet up in the pine country shouts to them from as far as he can see them, “Bo zhoo, neche,” and then follows it up with launching at them a few of the most obscene words in the Ojibway language, which they have all learned. The Ojibways would never do so to white people.

Nearly every summer I have been on a long canoe trip, lasting a week or two, with white gentlemen as passengers, and Indian canoe men; and nearly always I have found that before the end of the trip the Indians established themselves as the better gentlemen of the two. The white men would be impatient, cross, fretful, on account of mosquitoes, rain, cold, or the mishaps of travel; the Indians always preserved their equanimity in the most trying circumstances. No matter if they were packing very heavy loads, while the white gentlemen walked empty-handed; no matter if they were devoured by mosquitoes, while, their hands being full, they could not switch them off; no matter if the trail was horrible, encumbered with fallen logs, and they sinking to their middle in the swamps, weighed down by their heavy loads, while perhaps at the same time a sudden shower would fall; there never was a word nor a look of impatience, but they smiling as tranquilly as if it had been a good path and a sunny day. Their manhood would not allow them to demean themselves by showing the slightest fretfulness or impatience under any circumstances. Their conduct was a silent rebuke to their white brothers. Seeing them so petulant, so easily worried, often so unreasonable, they felt for them a, good-natured contempt.

THE CHRISTIAN OBJIBWAY

Can the Indian rise to the standard of the white man? To answer this question, one looks backwards, and thinks of the Indians he has known; and as the picture of them rises before the memory, I have to, confess that some of the best men I have ever known, and the freest from faults, were Indians. There, for instance, is Edward Reese, a full Indian, for twenty years government teamster at Leech Lake. Industrious, faithful to every duty, a good neighbor, a kind father and husband, patient and forbearing, honest and loving, the sweet spirit of Christ looking out of his face, in his daily life he has been an inspiration to every one who meets him, whether whites or Indians. Running my mind over twenty years of intimate knowledge of this man, I cannot recall an act, or a word even, that Edward Reese did or spoke, that was not a manly and a Christian act or word. Yes, one would

have to go even farther than that, and say that he never saw Edward Reese show 95 a temper even, that was not a Christian temper. Of how many white men one knows can one say the same? Yet Edward Reese is not a whit better than the old chief, David Kirk, of the same village. Nor is he any better than was the blacksmith, now deceased, Ke-zhi-osh. Nor was he any better than was old Rocky Mountain of Red Lake, or Shay-day-ence of White Earth, or a great many others, including some in every village. So the answer to that question, after summoning up witnesses to the bar of memory and trying the case, has to be, if it is the answer of truth, by one who knows them intimately, that even in one generation, and with all the disadvantage of heredity and most unfavorable early surroundings, a great many Indians are just as good, and as nearly perfect characters as any white men or white women ever get to be.

And what has been said above of the men applies equally to the women. They may not know how to dress as nicely, and not be so well acquainted with points of etiquette, but there are just as good women, and plenty of them, among the Indians as there are in any white community. It would make this paper too long to give examples.

But here a word of caution has to be put in. Every one of those I have been speaking of are Christians. I have rather a poor opinion of heathen character, and would not expect to find much that is lovable there; a few noble traits, perhaps, that show what the original edifice was intended to be, amidst a mass of ruins. There is not much that is desirable in the old life; nearly all has to be built up anew out of Christianity. I am not writing here an essay on Christianity or missions; so I pass that side of the question. over entirely, only saying that the most sincere, consistent, lovable and zealous Christians I have ever known in my life were Indians. Some of them have passed away; a great many are still living. Nor do I speak of the Indian clergy still living, now eight in number, who are all of them all that such men ought to be. Taking it on the whole, I think that Shay-day-ence, who from being the great grand medicine man of the Ojibway nation and a chief servant of Satan, became late in life a Christian and a wonderful volunteer missionary, was the most wonderful Indian I have known. Paul did not have a stranger conversion, 96 nor a more

burning zeal, than did old Shay-day-ence. There is a very imperfect sketch of him in this Society's Library, so I will say no more of him.

With what feelings does the Ojibway regard the coming of the white man into his vicinity? With a feeling of apprehension, and a wish that he would not come. When the whites within the last five years were about to come near Cass lake, the chief, an excellent man, told me that he wished they would not come, because it would break in upon their “righteousness of life.” We, who saw how they lived, would not regard it in many respects as “righteousness of life;” but that was their feeling.

TREATMENT OF THE AGED

How are the old treated by the Ojibways? Oftentimes a daughter will do a good deal for her aged parents; but a son cares very little for them (I am speaking of the heathen), and does less. It is with them as with ourselves, the women are a good deal better than the men. But it seems to be an unwritten law among them that an old man, and especially an old woman, must shift for himself or herself somehow. They have a contempt for the aged and useless, like all heathen. The son never seems to think he is under any obligation to do anything for his aged father or mother. Nor do they make any complaint of him, for they do not seem to expect anything. And one always hears the complaint that food given by the government, or by charitable persons, does not get to the old persons for whom it was intended, but is eaten by the well and strong.

Going a few years ago to the house of one of our Indian missionaries, I noticed an old heathen woman lying on the floor, who seemed so feeble she could not sit up. On inquiry it appeared that her son had told her, in the very coldest of January, to go out of doors and make her bed in the snow, because he was afraid to sleep in the house with her, fearing that she was about to turn into a man-eating witch. That, of course, was only an excuse; the real reason was that he was tired of her, and yet she had been a good and devoted mother. So she had to go, and slept out several nights, and was so badly frozen that she

died in the hospital to which we had her taken. The missionary and his wife had brought her 97 to their house, as soon as they learned of it. When dying she sent for her son, but he paid no attention to it, and left it to strangers to bury her. It excited no comment, nor was he apparently lowered in the estimation of the community in which he lived. Taking a general view, we must say that the old are badly neglected and have a hard time. One good old woman who was blind was generally reported to have starved to death, though her relatives, who were numerous, might easily have given her rabbits or a little something to eat.

TOBACCO SMOKING AND CHEWING

Tobacco is largely used by the Ojibways, men, women, and children. They smoke it mixed with the inner bark of the red willow, and also chew it. All the children think they must have their tobacco the same as their elders. The women from Cut-Foot-Sioux are the greatest chewers I have seen. Ordinarily the heaven man thinks he must have a plug as long as one's arm and as thick. It is doubtful, though, Whether they use more of it than certain classes of our own people. I once asked the principal merchant at Leech Lake, how much money he took in in a year from the Indians for tobacco. He made a calculation, and said $2,000. There were three stores there, and if the others sold as much it would make $60,000 a year in that one Village. There were about 1,000 persons around the lake, and perhaps two-thirds of them got their tobacco there. The total government annuities for 1,600 Indians were $10,666. For a people as poor as they were, often starving, this was a serious drain on their resources, and it seems strange to us that they did not apply that $6,000 to food. An Indian at Leech lake lately went to a merchant and told him that he and his family were in such a state of absolute starvation that he must have five dollar's worth, on credit, to save them alive. The good-hearted merchant consented, and told him to name the kinds and amounts of provisions to take up the five dollars. The first item the man gave was tobacco, a dollar and a half.

MORTALITY OF CHILDREN.

Although the Indian women, beginning early, bear so many children, comparatively few live to maturity. Ask any 7 98 aged woman how many children she has had, and the answer will usually be from eight to twelve. Ask her how many are alive and the answer will usually be one, two, or none at all. The hardships of the life, cold, hunger, insufficient clothing, the carrying children to heathen dances, and the want of knowledge how to care for them in sickness, are the causes of their dying young. For instance, in the winter of 1873 there was an epidemic of whooping cough in White Earth. I constantly saw children clad only in the cotton shirt, cotton leggings, and moccasins, standing in the road in the cold snowy weather, coughing violently with the whooping cough; no wonder that over fifty died, out of a population of some hundreds, while out of the same number of people in the white town from which I had come, and where there had also been an epidemic of the same disease, not one had died.

AVERSION TO BATHING; HOUSES OF ONE ROOM

I have never known the adult heathen Ojibways to wash their bodies or bathe. The boys and girls and young people sometimes bathe, but never the grown up people that I have seen. As they all live in one-roomed houses, they hare no facilities for doing so. Yet I have known some to live to ninety-two years, and some indeed to be considerably older, with very poor food, and in defiance of all sanitary laws, who I am sure had not washed, except their faces and hands, for sixty years. They do not seem to think it necessary or beneficial When children are taken into a boarding-school, there is apt to be a great fight with the parents to allow them to be washed, as they think that water will seriously injure them.

The reason why they prefer the one-roomed house is on account of the sociability and for greater warmth. They are gregarious. They love to see and hear each other, love laughter and jests, and as they have no books or newspapers or any other means of passing their time, they find their amusement in each other's society. It is therefore by preference and not from poverty that they have the one-roomed house. Then in their cold winter climate one room is much more easily heated than several. The chief of Cass lake, a Christian

man, when his three daughters married, built for each one and her husband 99 an addition to his house, a log room at-the end, each room communicating by a door with the rest of the house. In this room the new family was installed, and so were private. But I have never known a heathen family to have more than one room, in any house they built themselves. The missionaries and some of the Christians have more than one room, and in the new houses built by the Chippewa Commission within the last five years for the new removals to White Earth there was usually an upstairs part, which could be used as a sleeping room. But to the mass of the people the idea of shutting one person alone in a box of a bedroom seems an unnatural way, and far inferior to their own. They can sleep far better with the children crawling over them, and a warm fire at their feet.

HUNTING AND KILLING GAME

The Indians kill game at all seasons, everything that has life. All summer long they hunt deer by torchlight. A few years ago we sent an Indian clergyman to Cass lake in May, and in two months he killed twenty-five deer, mostly by torchlight, up the Mississippi, in his canoe. The Indians at the Narrows of Red lake, opposite to the Agency, killed in one fall, by actual count, eighty-seven moose, swimming in the lake, near their village, to escape from the flies. That was in 1887, I think. Last winter many Indians about Sandy lake had killed, by December, sixteen deer each since the snow fell. Many of the Indians of the White Earth reservation killed that winter, of 1896–97, forty deer each, as owing to the unusually deep snow the deer could not get away from them. They pursued them on snowshoes, and killed them with axes. I myself saw deer pursued and floundering in the deep snow, making very little headway. Last winter I was at the village of Home-returning-Cloud, near Leech lake, and found he was absent with most of the women. I learned that they had gone to pack home five moose, which he had killed about twenty miles away. He had previously killed two moose. One would think that this indiscriminate slaughter of the deer and other animals winter and summer would result in their exterminations; but, strange to say, their numbers have 100 been constantly increasing within the Indian reservation, until last winter. For instance, when the Indian clergymen went to Red lake

first in 1877, they noticed that it was a rare thing for any deer to be killed; there were very few deer, but afterward they kept constantly increasing, and the Indians every year kept killing more and more. This continual increase of the deer furnishes a curious confirmation of what the Indians are always saying, that “the Great Spirit always sends something for His Indian children, and seems to specially provide for their wants. He sends them the wild rice which they neither plant nor cultivate nor fence, but only reap, and He sends them many other things.” I suppose the explanation of the increasing plentiness of the deer, notwithstanding the continual slaughter of them winter and summer, is that given by the Indians, namely, that as the country south becomes settled the deer go north into the reservations, the only unsettled part of the country, and although so many are killed off they still keep coming in. It may be also, though the Indians do not say so, that the English working on the Canadian Pacific railway scare them down this way. But their numbers reached and passed the high water mark, I think, in 1896 and 1897, in that last winter of deep snow, when almost every man was out after them, and many hunters, as has been said, killed forty each.

Indians, as is well known, never leave any game for a future time, or for future needs, but kill everything in sight, even if they have so much flesh that they are unable to use it. Usually, all winter long, one can buy moose meat and venison in Red Lake village and Leech Lake for five cents a pound, and sometimes for much less. In the beginning of November most of the men move out and establish deer-hunting camps, and stay out till about the first of January. Heretofore about Cass lake has been the best place for deer and moose. Some reindeer were also killed there several years ago, but very few of late years. In a letter to the state fire warden a few years ago I gave an estimate, made with the aid of the best-informed Indians, of the numbers of deer annually killed by the Indians of the different villages, and it ran up into many thousands. The deer and moose skins are all utilized for 101 moccasins. The Mille Lacs people have so many that they can sell; those in the other village keep them for their own use. The Ojibway justly prefers the moccasin, winter and summer, to any other foot-wear.

NEGLECT OF DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The Ojibways, like Indians everywhere, have no feeling whatever for the sufferings of animals. They always allow numbers of domestic animals to starve in winter and spring, though with two or three days of labor they might cut hay enough to keep them fat. Vow often they do not house them; and the oxen and ponies stand out night and day for weeks when the cold is thirty or forty degrees below zero. It is pitiful also to see the starving creatures wandering through the villages, as Leech Lake, trying to eat horse dung that has a little straw or old hay mixed with it. It never seems to occur to the Indians to feel the least pity for their sufferings. Towards spring especially is the time when most of the cattle and ponies die of starvation. All around are native hay meadows, and in one day a man should cut grass enough to feed a horse or an ox for a year. One of the evil effects of maple sugar-making is that when they move from their homes to the sugar woods, they abandon any animals they do not use to transport them there; so the cable, hogs, or ponies, being turned out into the deep snow and having nothing either to eat or drink, wander about, unsheltered and starving, fill they die. This continual loss of cattle and ponies, every year, cripples them very much, as may be imagined, in their feeble efforts at farming.

The winter of 1896–97, on account of its deep snow, was unusually disastrous to the cattle and ponies. Some Indians had cut and stacked some hay on the meadows a few miles from where they lived, but had not hauled it home; and when the snow became deep, the ponies, being feeble, were unable to haul it, and so they nearly all died. At Cass lake there were only two or three ponies that survived; they nearly all died at Red lake, on the White Earth reservation, everywhere. Some tried to keep them alive by feeding them branches of trees; but, as may be imagined, with poor success. One would wonder 102 that, with the continual hard treatment every winter, and the great numbers that starve, there are any ponies left; but the explanation is that they get a fresh supply of ponies every summer from the Sioux, who abound in ponies. Most of the Ojibway men have their women make quantities of their beautiful bead-work every winter and store it up. When summer comes,

the husband carries it to the Sioux country, and brings back as many ponies as he had tobacco-pouches (kashkibitagunug). One of the bead-work pouches is the great ornament of an Ojibway, and any person wearing it is considered to be in full dress; it is worth a pony among the Sioux. Thus the stock of horses is every summer replenished. The Ojibways are not horse Indians; naturally they have no horses, excepting those they get from the Sioux.

The United States government occasionally has issued yokes of oxen, perhaps twelve yokes at a time, to as many Red Lake Indians. With these they hauled freight for the government, from the then nearest railroad station, Detroit, 100 to 110 miles distant; and later, when the railroad was built to Fosston, from that place, 65 miles. They, of course, camped out by the way. The roads were in many places shocking, and, between the severity of the labor and the want of feed and care, the oxen were usually all dead within two years. Oxen were often similarly issued to the White Earth indians; and they, too, often starved to death, from their owners not making hay for them in summer. Then instead of using them for farming they were used to take their families to, Indian dances, at great distances, as Leech Lake, 94 miles, Red Lake, 90 miles, or to the Sioux country, several hundred miles; and on such trips they were very poorly fed, and were otherwise abused. It is no wonder, therefore, that usually the oxen soon all died. They were used also to carry their owners and families where the different berries abounded, as they became ripe, often fifty or sixty miles distant.

Cows were also issued to the White Earth Indians, but they never milked them, as they do not care for milk and never drink it. The first Indian agent, E. P. Smith, who was there in 1872 and 1873, being a man of most admirable judgment, bought the finest cattle of the best breeds and issued them to 103 the Indians. The consequence was that in the following years visitors from St. Paul and other places, who were judges of stock, said that the cattle which they saw in summer grazing on the White Earth reservation were the finest they had ever seen in their lives. Within a few years broncho men have brought in that kind of horses, and traded them to the Indians for their cattle and got away from them

nearly all that remained. The bronchos enable them to get about quicker, visiting Sioux or going to dances, but are worthless for farming purposes. The genuine Indian pony (not the broncho) is the toughest thing in the world, and it is astonishing what loads the Indians will haul with them. The Indians at Leech Lake, for many years, hauled flour and goods for the merchants and supplies for the government, first from Brainerd, 68 miles distant, and later from Park Rapids, 45 miles. The roads for part of the way were indescribably bad, the wagons frequently sinking to the hub. Yet with small ponies and heavy wagons they managed to haul loads of from eighteen to twenty-two hundred weight. I do not think any white men could have got those loads over such roads with those small ponies. They kept at them day and night, often when they were staggering from weakness, until they got them to Leech Lake. The prices paid them were perhaps from 50 to 75 cents a hundred, from Park Rapids.

GREAT ENDURANCE IN WALKING

The Ojibways are good walkers. The Rev. Mark Hart left Red Lake at two o'clock in the afternoon of a November day, camped on the road about thirty-four miles out and the next evening was at my house, eighty or ninety miles from Red Lake. He thought nothing of it. They do not consider walking work. Even children of six years will walk twenty-five miles in a day for several days in succession and do not seem to mind it. Rev. Mark Hart's son, six years old, walked from Cass Lake to Red Lake, forty-five miles, in two days, and slept out on the road. I have known Indians to leave Red lake at noon, and get to the shore of Leech lake by midnight, the distance being sixty-five miles.

Old Rocky Mountain, living at Red Lake, heard that his annuity money, five dollars, was at White Earth, some ninety miles distant, and started to walk there to get it. He was between eighty and ninety years of age. When he got to the Twin lakes, sixty-five miles distant, on the second day out, he learned that the money had been returned to Washington. Consequently he turned and in the next two days walked back to Red Lake, walking on the

last day forty miles. He said he was not a particle tired when he got back, but was skipping about bringing pails of water. His son, who was with him, was tired. The same old man used to walk every year, at payment time, from Red Lake to Leech Lake, nearly seventy miles, and back, to receive his annuity, which was five dollars, camping out in all weathers.

These Indians enumerate the great walkers who have been among them in the last two hundred years. One was an Ojibway, one a Frenchman, and the third James Lloyd Breck, the first missionary of the Episcopal Church among them. He walked in one day from the old agency near Crow Wing to Leech lake, and back the next, a distance of seventy miles each way. He was always doing such things, but never spoke of them and never thought of them. The Indians acknowledge that he could outwalk any of them. He walked so fast that they had to run to keep up with him. When I was coming once from Leech lake, and stopping for dinner at Pine river, thirty-four miles distant, an old Indian appeared, pursuing us, with a letter that had been forgotten. He delivered it, and turned round to trot home again, another thirty-four miles, when one of the party kindly sent him into the hotel to get his dinner. He was an old man, of about sixty years.

Along in the 70's and 80's the mail was carried by an Ojibway on foot from White Earth to Red Lake, and back, once a week. The distance between the places is 80 or 90 miles, and was through an uninhabited wilderness, with only one house on the way. On Monday the man usually walked 25 or 32 miles, and camped; the next day he walked 32 or 40 miles, and camped; the third day he arrived at Red Lake by noon. After resting a day he repeated the trip by return to White Earth. His mail sack weighed sometimes from 50 to 75 105 pounds; and in addition he had to carry his provisions and blanket. In winner the roads were deep with snow, the trail hardly broken, and in summer he was devoured night and day by mosquitoes, and could only live at all by switching his neck and face constantly with twigs and leaves. He was paid one dollar a day, and his provisions. Usually one Indian carried the mail only a little time, when he gave way to another. Allan Jourdan, now deceased, a half-breed, carried it the longest, three months. Once while the poor exhausted carrier was sleeping at Wild Rice river, his clothing caught fire from his camp

fire, and his limbs were dreadfully burned. He was carried by men on a litter to White Earth, and after a long illness recovered.

To illustrate how the Indians look on walking, even the most severe, as no work, I may tell the remark of an old blind woman, Bugwudj-ique (The Woman of the Wilderness). She was in my study when an Indian, the Red Lake mail-carrier, came in. After some conversation, she found he was a relative and tenderly kissed him. Then she asked him what he did for a living. He told her he carried the mail. “O—o,” said she, using the woman's long drawn out exclamation of surprise, “isn't that nice, no, work at all to do.; only to pick up your money at the end of the road.”

LONGEVITY; RECOLLECTIONS BY OLD MEN.

Many Indians live to ninety years and upwards, in constant suffering from hunger, lack of clothing, and cold, and-in the most unsanitary conditions. In 1897 died Nindibewini, at the age of ninety-two years. He was the Leech Lake Indian who in 159 remained behind, hiding in ambush, after the treaty of peace near Fort Snelling, and killed the Sioux, bringing as a result the disastraus battle in Battle Hollow at Stillwater, and another battle, which proved fatal to more than a hundred Ojibways. For many years his life was in danger from the rage of those who had lost relatives on that disastrous day. Though often urged, he never would become a Christian, saying that he had been the cause of too much blood having been shed, that God would not forgive him. The oldest man who has died in the present generation was 106 Gegwedjisa (Trying to Walk, as nearly as it can be translated) of Leech Lake, who was considered by the traders, after careful investigation, to be a hundred and fifteen years old. Conversing with him about twelve or fifteen years ago; I found that he perfectly remembered General Pike's visit to Leech lake, which was in February, 1806, and described him. Being asked at what age he was then, he said he was married and had a daughter “so high,” running about He was probably twenty-five years old then. Indians never know their age, but describe themselves as being “so high,” if it was in their childhood, when some noted event happened, such as “when the Indians

nearly all died of the small-pox," or "at the time of the great sickness caused by the rotten flour issued after the payment."

Old Shay-day-ence told me that when a child he remembered seeing old men with the hair of their heads all pulled out (such as we see in the pictures of Indians) and only the scalp lock left. He said the old fellows used to come into the wigwam where he was, and, bowing, as it were, alternately to one side and the other, would say in a deep guttural voice, "Oongh, oongh." He said he was mortally afraid of them and their smooth scalps. He said the hair was pulled out very quickly, a handful at a time, and that it caused them very little pain. The same old man was once with me in St. Paul, about the year 1882, I think, and we sat on a hill, the Park Place property, I believe, overlooking the city. For some time he did not recognize the place, it was so changed by the buildings; then all of a sudden it came back to him and he recognized it "There," said he, pointing to a certain place, "was Little Crow's village; and there was where the road led out of his village into the country, and it was beside that road that two Indians and I were secreted, when two women, I think, and a man, not suspecting any danger, came out along the path and were killed and scalped by our party, who then made off to the Ojibway country." Such was life in St. Paul at that early time. He did not say that he killed any of them, and I hope he did not; but even if he did, being a heathen man at that time, and a recognized state of war existing, and it being according to their ideas of right or even merit, we should be slow to pronounce judgment in the case.

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HABITS IN WORK; LOGGING, RIVER DRIVING, GARDENING.

When the Ojibway man works, strange to say, he works very fast, much faster than a white man. Perhaps that is one reason why they so soon get tired of it and give it up, because they exert themselves so strongly while they are at it. This is seen, for example, in hoeing a field. The men, and the women also, are excellent with the ax, being trained to it from earliest infancy. When some boys whom I sent to school were in Illinois, the people there

used to turn out to see those boys chop. Though it was a wooded country, done there could handle the ax as they.

Ojibways hired in a logging camp usually do not stay very long; a week or two, till they get a little money ahead. Then they go home to spend it and rest. This is a relic of the old life, when a period of violent exertion was succeeded by a prolonged rest. Occasionally, however, one will be found who will stay in a logging camp all winter. The lumbermen say that while they do work they are as good hands as any. They like working with the ax better than almost any other labor.

One kind of work they excel in and are particularly fond of, river-driving. The excitement, the continual change, just suits them. Monotony in anything they cannot stand. The constant repetition of performing the same act over, over and ever again, as white people do, for instance, in manufacturing, is insupportable to them.

Contrary to what would be supposed, the Ojibway excels the white man in making a farm or garden, when he wants to do it; not in wheat-farming; however, or such farming as he has not been used to, but such as he knows, vegetable raising. A skilled white farmer and gardener went on. a journey of a hundred and twenty miles through the white man's country from Gull Lake settlement to Hubbard and back; and he told me the best gardens by far that he saw on the road were Indians' gardens. The white men could not begin to equal them. Similarly a resident of Bemidji, an old farmer, told me that the best garden in all that region was that raised by Shenaw-ishkunk, the old Ojibway who had always lived on the town-site of Bemidji. The Indian has genius; he can do 108 anything he wants to, and his genius shows in the looks of his garden, even though it be a small spot he cultivates.

SALUTATIONS.—ASIATIC ORIGIN.

The Ojibways have, in their own language, no word of salutation at meeting or parting. They have, however, adopted from the French the phrase, “Bon jour.” As there is no “r” in

their language, the nearest they can come to it is “Bo zhoo,” which is now their salutation at meeting and parting. However, when a guest is leaving, the proper thing to say to him is “Madjan, madjan” (go, go). Often I have seen Ojibways who were good friends and had not seen each other for a long time meet unexpectedly on the trail in the woods, look at each other affectionately for quite a long time, and then pass on without a single word being said on either side, not even “bo zhoo.”

Some of the Indians have a very Chinese cast of features. The way the eyes are set, and the color of the skin, leave no doubt of a Chinese or Japanese origin. I saw one Indian near Winnibigoshish who in his looks seemed to me as veritable a Chinaman as any that ever left China.

VISITING; DELIBERATENESS IN THINKING AND SPEAKING.

When the Ojibway pays a visit to a white man, his time is any time from the dawn till after bedtime, and he enjoys making a good long visit, of many hours' duration or all day. This is because he has no particular business to call him away, and he is deliberate in all his movements. If a man, he smokes his long-stemmed Indian pipe a good part of the time, and talks. Smoking seems to assist his mental operations; and when anything difficult is to be thought out he instinctively reaches for his pipe. He does not need to be entertained, as a white visitor would, with small talk; he is content to sit and think, and absorb the, to him, unfamiliar surroundings. However, like every other man, he is pleased at being occasionally spoken to, and taken notice of.

When a woman pays a visit she does not need, as a white woman, to be amused or entertained; she will sit for hours 109 saying nothing, but perfectly satisfied, taking in everything, the appearance of the house, the manner of housekeeping, the people. It would be a bore to her to be talked to. She has come there to enjoy herself in her own quiet way by looking. White women at first think they must entertain their Indian sister visitor by talking to her, as they would to a white visitor; but soon they find out the better

way, namely, to let her alone. If she is talked to she answers in monosyllables, and manifests no wish to keep up an animated conversation. But all the time she is taking in everything. By and by, after she has sat perhaps for hours, and not before, she will tell what she has come for, get it, and leave. In the same way a man will sit a longtime, and not tell his business; or, if asked, will merely say that he came “for nothing.” By and by, when he is ready to leave, he will at last do his errand.

Indians are much more deliberate in thinking and in speaking than white people. We know how fast white people, women especially, will sometimes chatter, talking fast, three or four at once. Oftentimes no thinking seems to accompany the speaking. The Indian always thinks as he speaks, and only speaks so far as he thinks. There is a volume of small talk among us that is absent among them. With them is deliberation. For instance, if one goes into the house or wigwam, and makes the formal friendly inquiry, “Are you all well?” the man or woman thinks a considerable time before answering, and then gives the exact state of the health of the family. With us it would be answered as unthinkingly as it is asked. The same deliberation and thought of what is said runs through all their intercourse. There are some women, never men, who talk at once and somewhat fast, but rarely so.

OJIBWAY GIRLS AND WOMEN IN HOUSEWORK.

If the women have a piece of work to do, as washing a church floor, or anything else, they like to do it as a frolic; a number joining together in it, and making it easy by continual jokes and laughter. To do it alone would seem much harder.

In doing any work, or anything else, an Indian cannot be forced or driven; he can only be led, and allowed to do it 110 voluntarily. If attempted to be driven, he will simply stop, and not do anything, and he cannot be compelled. For instance, my wife, who had Indian girls to help in the housework for many years, found that if she would say to an Indian girl, as she would to a white girl, “Do this now,” pointing out some piece of work, however simple,

she could not get it done. But if she would show it to the girl, and say that she wished it done, and go off and leave her alone for five minutes, she would find it done when she came back. The Indian nature rebels against being driven to do anything, but must do it voluntarily if at all. So all people who have sense never try to drive Indians to anything. By leading them to it, it can be got done. That is the way they are made; no people in the world so unlikely candidates for slaves as they. Every Indian is innately proud and rebels against obeying any direct command.

Indian girls do not take naturally to housework. The monotony of doing the same acts over and over again, as washing dishes, cooking, etc., is insupportable to them. Consequently a few weeks of it is as much as they usually can stand. The old life was a life of continual change and excitement; the treadmill comes hard. My wife has never found any Indian woman who could do three good days' work in a week; a few can do two, but the majority can only brace up once a week to do a real good day's work.

In an Indian village where there are hundreds of women and girls, very poor and very much in need of everything, there are yet very few or none at all whom one can get even to attempt to do any housework. For instance, I have known the government blacksmith at Leech Lake, where there must have been hundreds of women and girls, scour the white man's country for a distance of sixty-five miles from Leech Lake trying to hire a white girl to help in the housework. No girl or woman at Leech Lake could be hired. People may think that when they go to the Indian country they will be waited on like lords; but the truth is that each one must do everything for himself. A very high price must be paid, and very imperfect service will be rendered, if at all.

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ADVICE TO TRAVELERS IN THE OJIBWAY COUNTRY.

Time does not run in the Indian country. One may make all arrangements, for instance, to start on a journey at a certain hour, but when the time comes a great many things will

be found to be wanting, and the start cannot be made. The canoe has not been made watertight with pitch, or paddles are wanting, or provisions, or something, or many things. There is no use in fretting or fuming; it is the custom of the country, and the only thing to do is to fail in with it. The Indian is a leisurely man, and does not wish to be hurried; in fact, he does not hurry, and there is no use in trying to hurry him. It will only make things worse. There is plenty of time; one day will do just as well as another, or one time as well as another. So the traveler has need of patience, and must conform to the ideas of the people.

If the traveler wishes some piece of work done, and tells his head main to have it done at once, he will probably not get it done in that way. The head man will answer that he will, after a while, call his men together, and they will talk it over. They will have a sort of council over it and smoke, and then do it. The men are all admirable canoemen and packers, and will do a good day's work, but in their own way, and according to their ideas.

OJIBWAY PERSONAL NAMES.

One of the things about the Ojibways that seems strange to us is the mystical importance attaching to a name, and the concealment of names. No Ojibway man or woman will tell his name, unless he has become very much Americanized. If a name has to be given, say to be put to some document, and the man is asked his name, he will not give it; but, after a long period of hesitation and embarrassment, he will indicate some other man who will tell his name. That man, finally, after prolonged consideration, mentions it, and when it comes out, a sensation goes over the assembly as if some great secret had been let out. So in a store, if the name of the intending debtor be not known to the storekeeper, and he has to know it to charge the gods, he asks, with a manner indicating profound secrecy, some one else to tell him the man's name, 112 and it is given to him in a whisper, as a great secret. Often have asked a man his wife's name, and after long hesitation he would confess that he had never heard it. On questioning, he would admit that he had been married to her

fifteen or twenty years. This secrecy is about their Ojibway name; about their English name, if they have any, they have no such feeling.

The reason of this reticence, which seems so queer to us, is that by them great importance is attached, as in the Old Testament, to a name; that the names all mean something, as Abraham, father of a multitude, Isaac, laughter, Jacob, supplanter, and that the name is given ass religious act. So a father says to his son, “My son, I give you this name; it has a spiritual signification; it is to you a sacred thing; the spirits give it to you; if you make light of it, or mock it, or disclose it, I do not say that the Great Spirit will kill you, but you will have disgraced yourself.” Hence is the concealment of names, the reverence with which names are regarded.

REGARD TO PROMISES.

The heathen Indian does not have the regard to a promise on his part, or to his pledged word, that tradition on that subject would make us believe. While it is true that treaties are not first broken by him, it is also true that in ordinary things he does not consider his word or engagement very binding on him. His promise to do anything, or to return money loaned, or to work, or an engagement, in fact his promise in anything, sits very lightly upon him. It is a little singular that in the face of this it is his habit to hold the white man very strictly to his promises to him, and to the very time, moment, and every particular circumstance. He is not willing to admit any excuse, and will hold him to it to the very last point. It is proper to say, though, that women, as with ourselves, are a great deal more reliable than men, for if one loans a small sum of money to an Ojibway woman, the chances are that she will pay it. The opposite is more probable with the man. I have always found, too, more of the milk of human kindness in old women than in any other class. Let one be lost, or 113 suffering, or belated, or cold, or needing direction, and he will find the old woman one who will help him, more probably than any one else. Perhaps their own long experience of great suffering has taught them compassion for others.

EXPECTATION OF GIFTS.

When a white man approaches a camp of heathen Indians, they will often call out from a long distance, as far as they can see him, “We are very hungry; we are starving to death; we have not eaten a morsel for three days.” At the same time they laugh heartily and slap their thighs, as if it was the best joke in the world. Likewise they often tell their visitors, with great insistence, of their extreme poverty, and the hunger they suffer. They seem to think there is a special merit in it, in fact seem proud of it. Their poverty is a favorite subject of talk with them. Often two families will chaff each other, in a good-natured way, about it.

From the habit, in former times, of United States Indian agents and military officers, to give something to the Indians when they met them, it has come now to be very natural for the heathen Indians to expect the white man to give them something, as food or money, when he meets them, and they are apt to ask him for it, but especially for tobacco. From that old custom, the first thought that naturally arises now in the heathen man's mind, when he sees a white man approaching, is that he will get something from him. Knowing also that the white man is so rich, and they so poor, naturally strengthens that feeling.

LACK OF SYMPATHY; SENSE OF HUMOR.

The Indians, strange to say, are not prone to assist each other in misfortune or necessity, as other people are. Where, for instance, a number are hauling loads together, with teams, and something befalls one, the others are apt to pass him by and leave him to shift for himself as best he can. Two or three years ago an old man and his wife were about eighteen miles from the White Earth Agency, when in attempting to mount his horse he broke his thigh. They had five horses, 8 114 and they had to give an Indian who was there one of those horses, before he would take a message to the doctor, only eighteen miles distant. It was worth about a dollar to do it. That is about the usual way; they are apt to exact a very high and extortionate price for anything they do for each other.

This brings to mind also that they are very calculating and mercenary. A thing is never done out of generosity or goodness, but with an eye to advantage. If one gives a present, for instance, to another, it is calculated that by a return present, or in some other way, a greater advantage is to accrue to the giver. It is true that they share food with any one who comes, so long as they have it; and in that way, if one happens to be industrious and have food, he is eaten out of house and home by a multitude of idle ones who flock there for that purpose. Apart from that custom of hospitality, they are not given to be generous in assisting each other, and from the unfortunate they are ready to exact the highest rate.

They are also apt to be very jealous of any one, as a sick person or one in misfortune, having his or her wants relieved. They feel that they also ought to have a similar amount, or even try to get it away from the sick person. In this, as in so many other instances, I am speaking of the heathen Indians.

Their sense of humor and of the ludicrous is exceedingly keen, more so than in our own race. No people are quicker than they to see the funny side of anything; and no people laugh at it more. They are capital at telling funny stories, and thoroughly enjoy fun. They seek after it constantly; they brighten their lives with it. Some of them are what one would call “jolly” always.

HEATHEN DANCES AND THEIR INFLUENCE.

The heathen dance, with the beating of the drum, exercises a wonderful fascination over the Indians. When they become Christians, they themselves understand that they give up the heathen dance, for the two are the opposites of each other; but yet they are drawn into it again and again. There seems to be a chord that carries the throbbing of the drum into the Indian's heart. The drummers sit in the center, 115 chanting; the men start up, and dance round them, excited, quivering, whooping. They go, through all the motions of sighting, pursuing, killing, and scalping an enemy; and it is most interesting to see them. Then there is an interval or rest; the drums cease, the dancers sit down,

and all is quiet. Next some man dressed in ancient Indian garb, nearly naked, painted, with feathers in his hair and a tomahawk in his hand, gets into the arena and makes an address. The nevertheless exhausted subject of the addresses is about killing and scalping enemies, perhaps tearing out their hearts and drinking the blood. As the man describes how the shot brought down the enemy, or how the tomahawk cleft his skull, the drum gives a sympathetic tap, as each life goes out. When he has finished, the drums start with redoubled vehemence, the drummers accompanying them with a high-pitched chant; while a circle of women singers outside add their shrill voices. The men are dressed in moccasins, cotton leggings which leave the thighs bare, breech-clouts, and perhaps shirts, perhaps none. Strings of beads adorn their bodies, skunk skins are tied under their knees, and strings of sleigh bells are wound round their ankles or waists. Their faces have all the colors of the rainbow; and their hair is stiff with pomatum. After they have danced again, there is silence once more, and another orator rises. This time the address may be about something of the present that is uppermost on their minds, some grievance under which they are laboring, or some important project that is on hand. At the dances all important things are discussed; and if there be any deviltry on hand, there is the place where they work themselves up to it. The dance is the arena where they strive to outshine each other in eloquence, in boldness of design; and where, in the originality of their projects, they bid for popular favor.

In the excitement of the dance, moreover, and in order to gain the reputation of great men, they give away their property to each other, a horse, a blanket, a gun, anything they have. The man, as he goes capering round the ring and whooping, looking here and there as if he was uncertain what to do, suddenly sticks a rod in the ground before another man. That is the pledge of a horse that he gives to that 116 man, and then all the others look on him with admiration; he is strong-hearted and brave; he does not mind giving away the only horse he has. It is wonderful how the excitement of the dance works on them to give away all they have. I have known a government employee to go and strip the bed clothing from his wife's bed, and give it away in the dance. That is one reason why they keep up the

dance, to get presents. The little children from the schools, if there are any schools, are there, imitating their elders; they have jumped out the school windows to get to the dance, and are taking off their school clothes, given them by the United States government or by charitable persons, and are giving them away.

Off to one side of the dance is a group of perhaps thirty men, who do not seem to care for it, but are engaged in something more substantial. They are gambling. Every dance appears to require a gambling annex. Outside the circle of the actual dancers are large numbers of spectators, both men and women, who sometimes join in, but some are merely spectators.

When night has drawn a veil, then commences a sad scene of debauchery between the sexes. That is one of the principal reasons for having the dance; and that, as well as the gambling annex and other things, is considered to be proper and a legitimate part of the carousal. The dance and the drum are the religion of the heathen Indians. Ask a man what religion he is of, and he will reply that he belongs in the dance.

The next day one will see the household goods violently cast out of a cabin, and will hear sounds of violent quarreling within. The husband and wife were at the dance last night; one was unfaithful, and this is the breaking up of the family. All the young girls get ruined in the excitement of the dance as they grow up. When a Christian man begins to dance, or a farmer, he loses manhood, industry, every manly quality, and speedily goes back to the blanket and the wigwam again.

The fascination of the dance carries them long distances, perhaps a hundred miles, on foot, men and women, to the next Indian village to dance. I have seen the women go from Pine Point to Leech Lake, sixty-five miles, to dance, in the 117 dead of winter, wading through snow up to their knees, over an unbroken trail that I could not go through with my ponies till they broke the road; yet they carried their children on their backs, and dragged some of them through the snow, packing their blankets and provisions, pots and kettles,

and camping out every night. And when they arrived at Leech Lake, they were as proud of jumping higher, or of showing off some new touch in which they thought they excelled, as any belle among us.

The authorities, as in Canada, should long ago have prohibited the heathen dance, as the very antipodes of all civilization and of all progress; instead of that, most of the Indian agents, caring nothing for the Indians, notwithstanding the entreaties of the missionaries, have given it full swing or encouraged it. The winter before the Wounded Knee outbreak, a party of fifty of the worst Sioux came to White Earth Agency, and taught the Ojibways the new “Sioux dance,” which caught among them like wildfire. In spite of the remonstrances of the missionaries that they should be sent home, they were furnished with passes to go to every village of the Ojibways, and were fed with government provisions. Yet the Goths and Vandals did not play any more havoc with the civilization of the Roman Empire than those fellows did with everything that the government should do, and that the missionaries were trying to do for them. By the new dances they introduced, the practice of which lived for years and until the present time, they did more harm to the Ojibways than all the money the government expended on them did them good. Later the government ordered all Sioux excluded; but the agents allowed them there just the same, and sometimes encouraged them.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGENTS AND SCHOOLS.

In 1872 there was a most admirable Indian agent over the Ojibways, under whom they made progress that was most wonderful, the Rev. E. P. Smith. He surrounded himself with employees who were like himself, and under them the Indians progressed like something growing. But he was promoted to be United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and for a time 118 the progress stopped. Soon another equally admirable agent came, Hon. Lewis Stowe. He and his excellent wife were like a father and mother to the Indians, and did everything for them that love and devotion and ability could do. They were the Indians' dear and loving friends. He was a practical farmer, a practical carpenter; and one could

see him out in the field all the time with the Indians, showing them how to plow, how to do all kinds of work. A better agent never went among the Indians, nor one who knew better how to raise them than Major Stowe; and if he could have had his own way and been sustained, he could have brought them to anything. But he was worried, hounded, and abused by interested parties; and at the end of his term he had to leave. There has since been one admirable agent, Col. T. J. Sheehan, the hero of Fort Ridgely, and he had exactly the same experience as the other two agents, Smith and Stowe. Col. Sheehan's heart was fully set in him to do the Indians good, and he knew exactly how to set about it. He had a natural faculty of being an admirable Indian agent. He was very energetic, was kind and just to all, and kept a sort of mother's hand over everything. But the same influence that had spoiled the salvation of the Indians under agents Smith and Stowe were opposed to him, and he had to leave.

Besides these three admirable agents, there have been six others, nine in all; and what sort of men they were and what sort of administrations they gave may be sufficiently understood by its being stated that they were politicians, appointed by politicians, as a reward for political services. Under them everything that had been done under Smith, Stowe, and Sheehan went down. The Indians largely gave up farming and civilization; fields were abandoned; and they went back to old heathen dances and heathen ways. Those of the missionaries who tried could not make head against the maladministration of the agents and their employees. One of those agents was fair; the rest were the poorest that could be imagined, and their influence upon the Indians was disastrous. Some of them openly encouraged the Indians to go back to the old heathen dances and ways. The employees of those agents naturally took their tone from them, so all government influence 119 was on the side of demoralization. There were such agents and such influences reigning for about sixteen out of the last twenty-five years. There were three good agents, one fair, and five of the kind spoken of. Politics has been the curse of the Indian service, and giving the Indians into the charge of such men and such employees has blighted them. The good agents were most bitterly fought, and the government relieved two of

them; the evil agents were left in peace and quiet, and the government usually allowed them to complete their terms.

At Red Lake a typical event occurred. In 1872 and 1873, an admirable son of Vermont was agent, a one-armed soldier of his country, Major Pratt. Like Smith, Stowe, and Sheehan, his devotion to the Indians and his success were remarkable. While everything was in the full swing of progress, there walked in one day a creature, and presented a paper to Pratt, superseding him. He was almost broken-hearted, went to the President and showed him his sleeve emptied at Bull Run, proved to him the progress made, and that there had been no single complaint; but all was in vain. He went back to milking cows in Vermont, squeezing two teats in his remaining hand, and the Red Lake Indians have never had a good agent since. The man who superseded him soon gave a sample of what he was by trying all ways to marry an Indian woman of bad character, though he had a wife still living in the East. Reviewing this quarter of a century, we must pronounce the United States treatment of the Indians as bad, owing to their being handed over to be the prey of politicians.

The good thing that the government has done in the last twenty-five years is in educating many Indian children, but mostly those of mixed blood, in schools. Here again for political purposes a great mistake was made in having these schools mostly away from the reservations, so that the congressmen's constituents could get the money used in the erection and carrying on of the schools, instead of having them right among the Indians where they live. Communities of many hundreds of Indians were thus left without schools, every child being allowed to grow up in idleness, ignorance, and vice, starving and freezing; while somewhere at hundreds 120 of miles distance, and where not an Indian lived within miles and miles, a costly building was put up at an expense of perhaps $50,000, which money alone, if used where it ought to have been used, would have supplied every Indian settlement with a modest school, costing $5,000, sufficient for their needs. The consequence of this policy, which was oftentimes really a policy to benefit some congressman's constituents under the guise of educating Indians, is thai the

mixed-bloods, mostly French, got all the benefit, for they sent their children away to those schools; but the full-blood Indians, who loved their children too dearly to let them go far away from them, got very little benefit.

TREATIES WITH THE OJIBWAYS.

Bishop Whipple, Judge Wright, and Mr. Larrabee, along in the 80's, negotiated a most excellent treaty with the Indians for their pine and lands. It was the best that could have been framed, both for the Indians and for the whites. Interested parties, who did not see their way to getting what they wanted under that treaty, found means, to break it up, and thereby inflicted a crushing blow upon the Indians. Then the same parties clamored for ex-Senator Rice to make the proper kind of a treaty for them. He, with Bishop Martin Marty, did so, and, with the best intentions on their part, they made a treaty that has worked very disastrously to the Indians. To instance one provision of it, the promising them an annuity for fifty years was done to please the Indian traders, who wanted the money. The practical effect of it upon the Indians was, as every one who knew them foresaw would be the case, to make them almost entirely give up farming or even doing anything for a livelihood; because every Indian said to himself, and many said openly, “I have an annuity, to come every year for fifty years, so has my wife, so has each of my children; no need for me to do anything.” If their worst enemy had tried to devise the best scheme for keeping them worthless blanket Indians always, he could have thought of nothing more effective than the annuity for fifty years. The general feeling of the heathen Indians, and of many Christians, when the provision was put in file treaty, was, “The 121 government has now got our lands; we wish to be fed always, and just to dance.” It is scarcely necessary to say that the Rice treaty of 1889, besides containing the above very objectionable point, has been broken by the government in many respects.

The government also is admittedly in debt to the Indians for large sums, arrears of former treaties, This condition keeps them from settling down to work, for they naturally think and say, “The government owes me so many hundreds of thousands of dollars; let it pay

me these arrears, and I shall be rich; no need for me to work." It would be better if the government should dump down before them whatever it owes them; and when that is spent, then and not before, they will go to work.

PAYMENT OF ANNUITIES; GAMBLING AND DRINKING.

October is payment month; but very often payment is not made till January or later, entailing great loss on the Indians. They are afraid to go off hunting or even logging, lest payment should be made in their absence; and so they lose much more than the amount of the payment by waiting for it. As the time approaches, their anxiety for it is extreme; almost as far off as one can see them, the first question is, "When is payment going to be?" When it is made in January they must come about thirty miles to Leech Lake, from Cass lake and Winnibigoshish, over the frozen, wind-swept lakes; and they must camp about Leech Lake village in a temperature of Perhaps thirty degrees below zero, with very little firewood, for near the village it has all been cut off; and they usually bring only the one blanket with them. We would not spend the long time, and endure the sufferings, for the amount, perhaps five dollars a head, which they get. Had they let the payment go, and gone hunting or working in a logging camp, they would have earned many times that amount. At payment they are all dressed up; it is a great frolic. All the sleigh bells, feathers, paint, and blankets, that can be mustered, are then put on. There are great dances every evening for joy of the payment The young fellows spend hours in painting their faces. Yet they are quiet and 122 orderly in their enjoyment. It seems to be a great pleasure to them merely to see each other and the crowds. There are more Indians assembled at that time than at any other.

There are always many houses rented as gambling houses at payment time, and one can make a tour of them, and find them all literally packed full of participants or spectators. There are always many professional Indian gamblers, who go to every payment, walking perhaps a hundred miles to the place. One meets companies of these a few days before payment begins. A large amount of the annuities paid is immediately gambled away, and

a large amount of it goes for whisky. The gambling is all open and above board, in sight of everybody; and nobody seems to think there is anything wrong in it, except the Christians. Spectators go from one gambling house to another, and the fortunes of those who win or lose are of deep interest to them.

The traders all lay in large stocks of goods then, and hire many extra clerks. All day long the stores are packed full of people, and a great part of the night. Some are buying, some looking at the crowds; but all are enjoying themselves in a quiet way. The girls are dressed in their best; the young men have flutes of their own making, on which they play love-songs to them. Outside of the store, there is darting about here and there, and good-natured revelry. From a distance the drum sounds, showing that the dance is in progress, and the groups visit all in turn, the dance, the stores, the gambling places. It is the time of the great annual frolic of the Ojibway, and every one feels happy.

The trader stands near the paying place, with his book in his hand showing the amount each man owes. As the man comes out with his payment, he looks wistfully at him, as any of us would; perhaps he asks the debtor for the money, perhaps not. The Indian will not be forced into paying; so some traders think it just as well to say nothing to them, to leave it to themselves. If they pay, they get a further credit; but if not, credit stops. There is no taking money from any one by force; nor is the creditor allowed in the paying place.

When the payment was made at Mille Lacs this year, it was in May; and the weather being fine, the Indians were all 123 camped. They danced every evening before the payment, for joy that it was to be. As soon as the money began to be paid, blankets were spread upon the ground in scores of places, right close to the paying-booth, and almost the entire population seemed at once to be engaged in gambling. Some had cards, some used the bullet and moccasin game. Even those who seemed to be almost dying were flourishing the cards. It seemed more universal there than elsewhere, because there is no mission at Mille Lacs. Within the next two days, four (as I remember) died of drinking pain-killer or something of that sort, and two became totally blind from lemon extract that had wood

alcohol in it; notwithstanding the labors of the missionary with each one individually, many days beforehand, warning and entreating them not to touch liquor in any form and not to gamble. But white men are just as liable to these evils, for some of them on the frontier die of lemon extract, and some become blind.

Old Indians often lament the degeneracy of the present days; for when they were young, they say, only middle-aged or old men were allowed to drink liquor, and it was done in an orderly way, as the drinkers would be ranged in rows, and some young men were there to keep order, and if any of the drinkers became obstreperous, one of the young attendants would silence him, saying, “Now, you keep still.” But in these degenerate days, they say, everybody, even little children, are allowed to drink.

At an Indian payment also is the time when young men show off on horseback before the people, and jerk and pull, and cruelly abuse their horses, to make them rear and plunge, and so to gain a little cheap admiration.

GATHERING WILD RICE; INDOLENCE OF THE MEN.

Wild rice gathering time, which comes in September, is an interesting occasion. There is a very large wild rice lake in the north part of the White Earth reservation; suppose that we visit it. We would find there six or seven hundred people, half-breeds and Indians, living in temporary wigwams or tents, who have come to gather wild rice. They have brought 124 their families with them. When the sun arises, hundreds of smokes go up from as many fires made outside their wigwams, where the women are cooking breakfast. Soon the breakfast is spread on the ground, and they reclining around it; and a delicious breakfast it is, nice light biscuit, ducks deliciously cooked, with wild rice and tea. Not many hotels could furnish such a meal, and none such a dining-room. After breakfast the women get into the canoes and launch out to beat off and gather the rice; but out of all the hundreds there, only a very few men, Christians, perhaps five or six, go with them. There has been a failure of crops; they have nothing at home, and only the wild rice they may gather now

to depend on to carry them through the winter. The wild rice is such an abundant crop that a Norwegian man (the only white man working there, he being employed for wages), says that a man can make seven dollars a day, at the market price for rice, by gathering it. Here then is a God-send, and something that calls for a great effort. But the fascination of the game is so great that, with the exception of a very few, all the men spend the day lying on the ground gambling. So the golden opportunity is missed. In a month they will have nothing at home; while by exerting themselves for a very few days in the rice-field they might have had plenty all the year. One family brings away twenty-one large sacks of rice; all might have done so, had the men cared to help. But some even complained that they were hungry, because, though the ducks were flying about thick and they might have shot all they wanted, they could not bear to tear themselves away from the game long enough to do so. Such is Indian life, and the mixed-bloods generally are just the same; but some of the mixed-bloods are just as nice as any white people in all respects, and in nothing inferior to them.

Within the last three years large numbers of mixed-bloods on the White Earth reservation have rented their farms to Germans from the Sauk valley, while they have moved into White Earth village and built themselves little shanties, where they will live on the rents. This movement seems to be spreading, and all are anxious to rent who can.

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RATIONS FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

The Indians and mixed-bloods who within the last seven years have removed to the White Earth reservation have been fed by the government with food of all kinds, pork, flour, tea, sugar, etc., some of them being so fed during a period of five years, and some during a less time. The Chippewa Commissioners, who had that matter in charge, paid the chief of those who had immigrated to exhort the others to raise a crop. They thought his influence and exhortation would be worth the money spent He took the salary, but, realizing that if the Indians raised an abundance the rations would be cut off, he exhorted them all,

instead, and charged them, not to plant a single thing, concluding that if they raised nothing and had nothing they would continue to be fed, but otherwise not. So sometimes in the same village where the chief lived, prolonged councils were held, and the people of the neighboring villages were called in a body; and the result they aimed at was to pass a law that no one should plant anything, for the above reason. In consequence, they planted very little. At first sight, this conduct seems very strange to us; but when we realize that these rations came out of their own funds, the proceeds of their pine forests, and also that several hundreds of thousands of dollars of arrears were due to them, we see that it was natural, from their standpoint, that they should wish to get out of their own funds all they could, and that whatever they succeeded in getting was to them so much clear gain. For the same reason they will work all kinds of games on the government doctor to get sick rations; or on those in charge of a school, to get clothing for the children. They know it comes out of their funds, and is their own, though trickery and deception have been used in getting it.

RATE OF MORTALITY; MIXED-BLOODS INCREASING.

The mortality among their children when in schools is extremely low, only a small fraction of what it is among those outside. Good food, good clothing, regular hours, and the weekly bath, make the difference.

Consumption is now very rife among the Indians. They say that in old times, when they lived practically in the open 126 air always, and subsisted on flesh almost exclusively, consumption was almost unknown among them. Many reasons for its prevalence now might be given, but one undoubtedly is the spitting over everything by the sick, while closely packed in one small room. The sputa dry, rise as dust, are inhaled by the others, and in that way the sick give this dread disease to the well. Many middle-aged and old persons, who do not have consumption, cough for a great many years; apparently from the irritating effects on the air-passages of the lungs occasioned by drawing such quantities

of smoke into them. Yet many such live to a good old age. The mortality in any Indian settlement is many times that in a white community of equal numbers.

The pure-blood Indians are slowly decreasing in number; the mixed-bloods are rapidly increasing. Owing to the great preponderance of men on the frontier, many white men marry Indian and mixed-blood women. As the latter also have each eighty acres of land, and if they remove to White Earth they and all the children will be rationed for years, while the man in addition will get oxen, cows, plows, wagons, sleds, a house, in right of his wife, etc., these things have their influence.

DESTRUCTIVENESS OF INTEMPERANCE.

As is well known, liquor has an attractiveness for the Indians and does destructive work among them; but white men also suffer in that way. Like all races of wild men, the Indians first rapidly and greedily learn the vices of the superior race; and only later, slowly and with extreme difficulty, they acquire their virtues. Thus the excessive use of liquor, the excessive use of tobacco, all such things, they eagerly seize; and therefore necessarily, unless Christianity be taught to counteract such things, unless there be a Christian mission to protect them, the contact with the superior race, and wish what is called civilization, is death to the Indian, death physical and moral.

One illustration only I may give. Before the town of Grand Rapids was founded, there lived near its site an unusually progressive band of Indians, called the Rabbit band from a patriarch of that name. They numbered perhaps sixty to 127 eighty. They had houses, stoves, good gardens and fields, and a great deal of stock, horses and cattle. They made much hay and sold it to the lumbermen, and, for heathen Indians, made great progress and were very comfortable. There came a white man from down the river and planted a saloon about two miles from them. He was the first settler in Grand Rapids, I think. In about two years half of that Rabbit band were dead, and the survivors were wretched shivering vagabonds, while the white man had all their former wealth. Some were frozen to

death when drunk; some were drowned by the upsetting of their canoes, when they were drunk; some lay down in the snow and took pneumonia; some were burned to death. The saloon-keeper had all their cattle, horses, stoves, and household goods; and those who remained alive had only an old blanket each.

When the white men reached Leech lake, the town they reared on its banks had one drug store, one hardware store, two dry goods and provision stores, and seven saloons, one of which was capacious enough to contain whisky sufficient to poison all the 1,100 Indians of Leech lake. It was on a high bluff overlooking their lake, accessible from every part of it by their canoes. It was a deadly trap set for the simple natives, right in their midst, by their strong white brother. The civilization of the white man, without the Gospel, is death to the simple Indian.

THE OJIBWAY LANGUAGE.

The children who have been brought up in the schools speak English; but those who have not been so taught, find our language excessively difficult and never learn it. Taking the people generally, Ojibway is almost exclusively their language; but among the mixed-bloods French also, is very extensively used.

The Ojibway language is a most beautiful, copious, and expressive one. It is most euphonious; there is not a harsh or guttural sound in it. All its sounds are perfectly familiar to us, but many of those in our language the Ojibways cannot utter at all. Strange to say, their language is very highly inflected. The Ojibway verb, for instance, is much more highly inflected than the Greek verb; it has whole conjugations of 128 which we in our English language know nothing. Nearly all parts of speech are turned into verbs and conjugated. Any idea which is expressed in our language can be perfectly well expressed in theirs. Being so highly inflected, and with many particles variously dovetailed in, it is, though so beautiful, and really a work of art, a most difficult language to acquire. A learned ecclesiastic, who told me he spoke nine languages, including a little of this, told me he

would rather learn the other eight than the single Ojibway. The greatest authority on Indian languages in our country some time ago made the settlement that any verb in the Algonquin tongue is habitually used in a million different forms. The wonder is how such a rude people ever constructed or ever handed down such a highly inflected language. To one who studies it, it is as great a surprise, to use the words of another, “as it would be to come on a beautifully sculptured Corinthian temple out on one of our prairies.”

In this paper I have left out altogether everything about the mission to the Ojibways, the ten congregations, and the eleven Indian clergy; though the history of Christianity among these people would be the more interesting narrative of the two.